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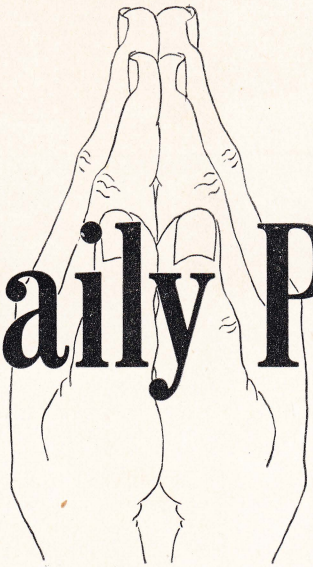

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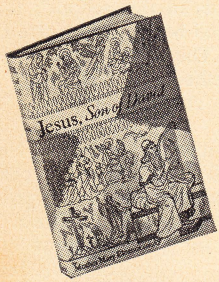

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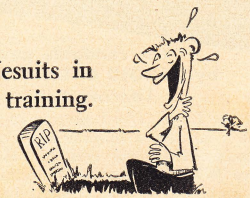

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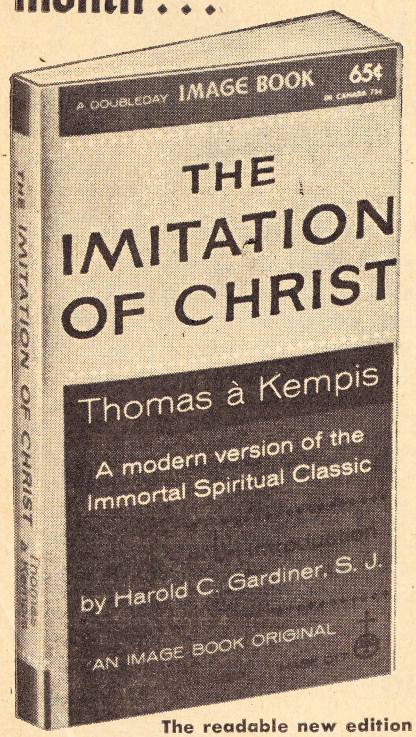

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Letters to the Editor

BOY SAVIOUR MOVEMENT

Dear Reverend Father:

Would you please send me the address of the Boy Saviour Movement, Inc., about which I first read in the MESSENGER? I gave my copy away to another Sister, and recently I made a hurried trip to New Orleans, where a Mercy Sister asked me for the address. As one Religious remarked, "This is what is needed in our schools to combat this spirit of defiance, but your voice is like one crying in the wilderness." Well, we shall see.

I have still another plan, and if Jesus wants his program carried out within our schools, surely He will help us to succeed this time. In October, our entire Order will unite to discuss school problems. I will ask Father to send us material about the Boy Saviour program.

I displayed the picture to my class and directed the children to follow their Captain. When Father Kurtz distributed the final reports last year, he remarked, "A miracle has happened in this room."

The short stay in New Orleans had similar results. I was told when I took over, "These are the meanest kids in this school"; the enrollment is 2,200, and Mercy and Notre Dame Sisters teach there. The change was so sudden that all were astonished and exclaimed, "How did you do it?" I could only reply, "Jesus did it."

So, Father, keep up the advertising. He will do the same for all our children. It changed St. Barbara's class so that one poster printing-press here told me they would make a large Boy Jesus poster for just the cost of the material.

SISTER MARCIAN
St. Louis, Mo.

For information concerning the Boy Saviour Movement, write to the Rev. Anthony Russo-Alesi, S.J., 44 Second Ave., New York 3, N.Y.—Ed.

MAY COVER

Dear Reverend Father:

Ever since I began reading the MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART (about two and one half years ago), I have greatly admired the wonderful paintings which appear on the cover of each issue. However, on the May cover of the MESSENGER there appears the most beautiful painting of the Blessed Virgin that I have ever seen. I have seen many paintings of the Blessed Virgin, but none has ever affected me as greatly as this one. After view-

Continued on page 59

MESSENGER *of the* Sacred Heart

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THE COVER, "Madonna and Child," by William E. Luberoff, emphasizes the human simplicity of the divine love which exists between God and the human race. The love of the incarnate Son of God for us, and the return of love that He asks, are visible in the human countenance of Our Lord. God's love for us is like the love of the Divine Infant for the Blessed Mother. He entrusted Himself to us as completely as He gave Himself to her, knowing that she was innocent, good and perfect, and that we are not; knowing also that we could become like her through his giving of Himself. What He asked of her, He asks of us: to love Him as his Mother did.

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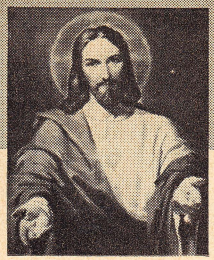


INTERESTS *of the Sacred Heart*

International Catholic Child Bureau

THE UNITED STATES COMMITTEE for UNICEF is making a big drive for international-mindedness in children. And, wisely, the International Catholic Child Bureau, founded in 1947, defined as the principal purpose of its 1955 meeting in Vienna: "the awakening in children of a sense of responsibility and a feeling of solidarity towards the rest of the world, that is, an international community including all nations, peoples, races and cultures." "It is evident," the I.C.C.B. said, "that any research or study concerning the development of an international sense in children answers an urgent need. In our times, it is essential to make the child understand at a very early age that he must not limit his universe to a small community. On the contrary, he must be made to gain that feeling of belonging to a world-wide community of human beings."

Opening under the presidency of His Eminence Angelo Cardinal Roncalli, Patriarch of Venice, its general sessions featured reports by Dr. Vittorino Veronese, Italian member of the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

The greater part of the work of the congress was assigned to eight specialized commissions. The meetings of the First Commission were presided over by the Rev. Edgar Schmiedeler, O.S.B., director of the N.C.W.C. Family Life Bureau, which is a charter member of the I.C.C.B. Dr. Schmiedeler is also executive secretary of the National Catholic Conference on Family Life. Dr. Maria Kiene, president of the Catholic Association of Kindergartens in Germany and secretary general of the Pre-school Education Commission of the I.C.C.B., assisted in directing the work of this commission. The other commissions discussed the education of children for living in the world community as it tied in with such topics as child group movements, religious education, international migration, mental health and missionary aspirations.

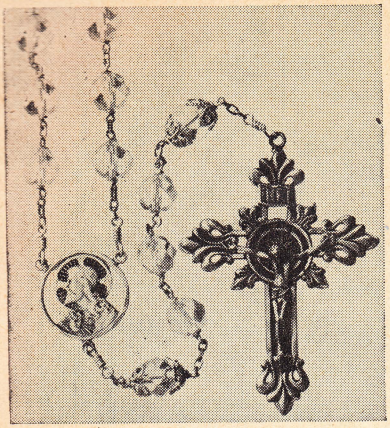
Father Schmiedeler's group considered the developing of an international and interracial sense in the pre-school child in the family, the nursery and kindergarten child in school, and the child from six to fourteen years old in the home.

"To make the work of the First Commission effective," Dr. Schmiedeler said, "certain ideas will have to be kept to the fore in its discussions. For instance, a fair knowledge of the child's nature on the part of the parent and teacher must be a key point in any program for developing a socialized individual who will eventually be characterized by a genuine interracial sense or international consciousness.

"Again, both parents and teachers must have a clear grasp of, and be influenced by, Christian principles if the child is to become a socialized individual in a full Christian sense. If they succeed in helping the child become an integral Christian, they will at the same time succeed in helping him to have the proper attitude towards other children of God, regardless of their color, ethnic background or national origin."

The Benedictine priest stated that among the facts "to be especially kept in mind" in this connection are these: "The unity of mankind; the dignity of every human being regardless of race, color or nationality; the real or potential membership of all in the Mystical Body of Christ; the fact that the very essence of Christianity is love of God and neighbor, and the fact that every man without exception is our neighbor."

Christmas Gift Suggestions



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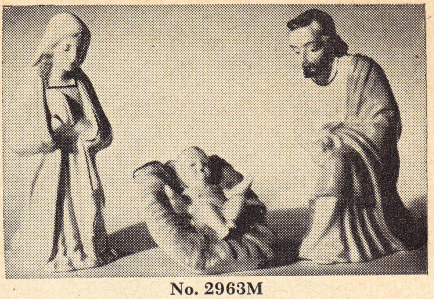

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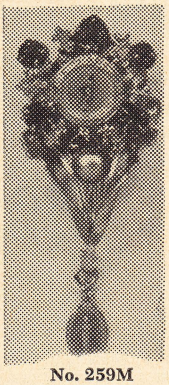

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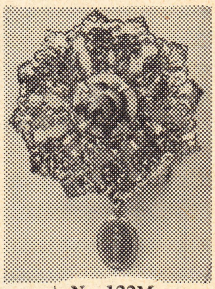

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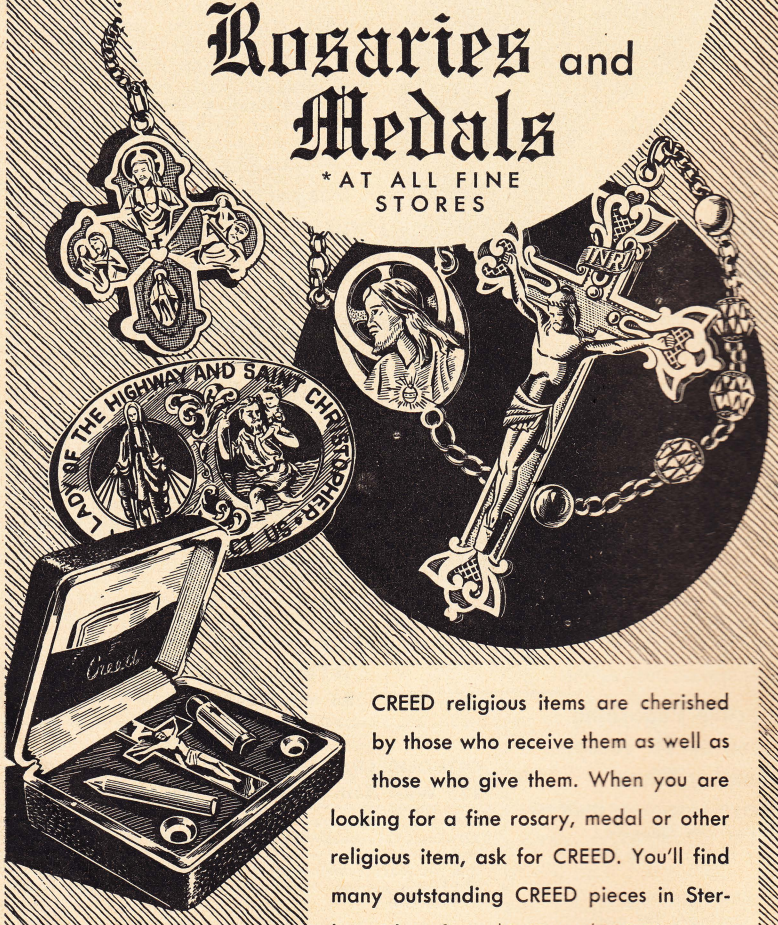

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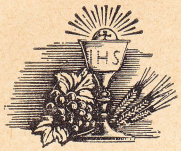


Calendar of the Month

DECEMBER, 1955

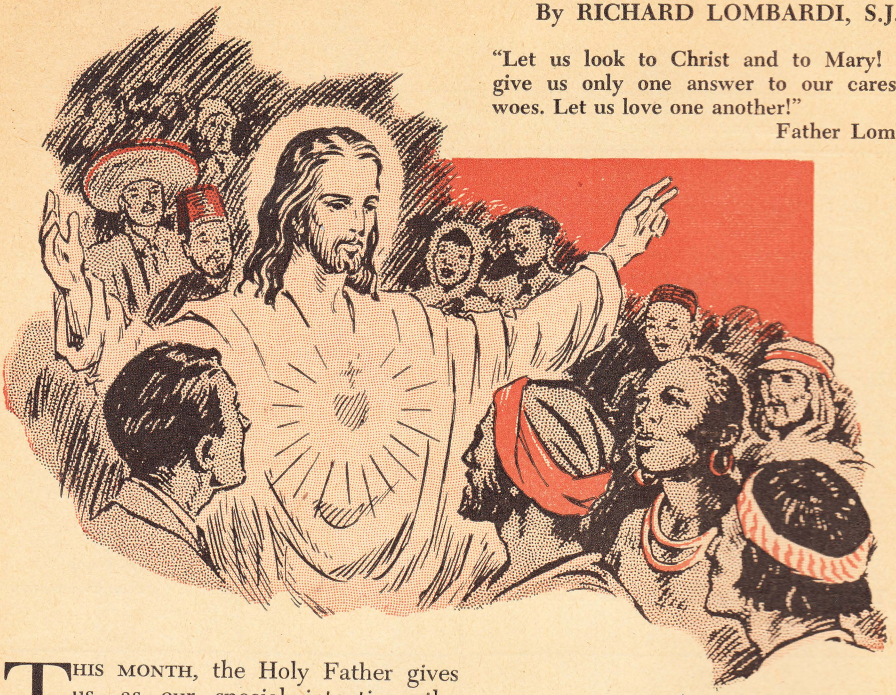
Feasts and Indulgences	*Suggested Daily Practice*	*Petitions Received*
1 Th. St. Eligius, Bp. C. H.H.	Probity	32,225 for thanksgivings
2 F. FIRST FRIDAY—St. Bibiana, V. M. 1st P.	Perseverance	25,113 for the afflicted
3 S. First Saturday—St. Francis Xavier, S.J., C. (Patron of the Apostleship of Prayer) 1st P. Pr.	Fear of judgment	39,587 for the sick
4 S. 2D OF ADVENT—St. Peter Chrysologus, Bp. D.—St. Barbara, V. M.	Zeal	60,581 for our dead
5 M. St. Sabbas, Ab.	Silence	10,390 for Local Centers
6 T. St. Nicholas, Bp. C.	Love for children	11,012 for Directors
7 W. St. Ambrose, Bp. D.	Recital of Creed	15,633 for Promoters
8 Th. IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF B. V. M. (Patronal Feast of the U.S.A.) (Holyday of Obligation) H.H. 1st P.	Daily Rosary	75,108 for perseverance
9 F. St. Leocadia, V. M.	Desire of heaven	61,824 for the young
10 S. Translation of the Holy House of Loretto —St. Melchiades, P. M.	Good works	23,021 for First Communion
11 S. 3D OF ADVENT (Gaudete)— St. Damasus, P. C.	Hatred of schism	32,219 for parents
12 M. Our Lady of Guadalupe	Fervor	49,297 for families
13 T. St. Lucy, V. M.	Purity	14,476 for reconciliations
14 W. Ember Day—St. Spiridion, Bp. C.	Simplicity	20,290 for employment
15 Th. Octave Day of Immaculate Conception— St. Valerian, Bp. M. H.H.	Love of the altar	56,269 for the clergy
16 F. Ember Day—St. Eusebius, Bp. M.	Asceticism	105,521 for Religious
17 S. Ember Day—St. Lazarus, Bp. C.	Love of Christ	53,522 for seminarians
18 S. 4TH OF ADVENT—St. Auxentius, Bp. C. C.R.	Hope	41,394 for vocations
19 M. St. Nemesion, M.	Good example	19,862 for parishes
20 T. St. Dominic de Sylos, Ab.	Freedom from sin	20,056 for schools
21 W. St. Thomas, Ap.	Act of faith	17,704 for superiors
22 Th. St. Frances Cabrini, V. F. Pr. H.H.	Prayer for Apostleship	12,536 for Retreats
23 F. St. Servulus, C.	Resignation	10,375 for societies
24 S. Vigil—Day of Fast and Abstinence	Vigilance	578,162 for conversions
25 S. CHRISTMAS—Our Lord's Birth	Love of Jesus Christ	69,183 for sinners
26 M. St. Stephen, First Martyr	Love of martyrs	27,036 for the intemperate
27 T. St. John, Evangelist	Love of the Sacred Heart	49,078 for missionaries
28 W. Holy Innocents, MM.	Care for children	25,634 for apostates
29 Th. St. Thomas a Becket, Bp. M. H.H.	Rosary for persecuted	18,483 for examinations
30 F. St. Sabinus, Bp. M.	Constancy	29,148 for various
31 S. St. Sylvester, P. C.	Love of the poor	For "Messenger" readers

PLENARY INDULGENCE: P.—Practice; Pr.—Promoter; C.R.—Communion of Reparation; H.H.—Holy Hour.

A BETTER WORLD

By RICHARD LOMBARDI, S.J.

"Let us look to Christ and to Mary! They give us only one answer to our cares and woes. Let us love one another!"
Father Lombardi



THIS MONTH, the Holy Father gives us, as our special intention, the Crusade for a Better World. The very name of this campaign is so closely connected with good that it cannot fail to draw the prayers of the Faithful. A special appeal to the Apostleship of Prayer should bear much fruit.

We are dealing here with a movement launched by Pope Pius XII in a sermon preached to the people of Rome, February 10, 1952. The Pontiff extended the movement to include every diocese of the world on October 12th of the same year. Since then, he has explained the meaning of the Crusade in a series of addresses. The movement has spread to many dioceses, not only in Italy but in other lands as well; and is now becoming the vanguard of a deep and universal rebirth. Its purpose is to build, gradually, a better world, devoted to goodness and a happier living, "in accord with the Divine Heart," as the Pope puts it. Here is the essential aim of the Crusade: (1) to transform more and more men into sons of God and real brothers of one another; (2) to organize their way of life in a manner worthy of one vast family, a family which is at once human and divine.

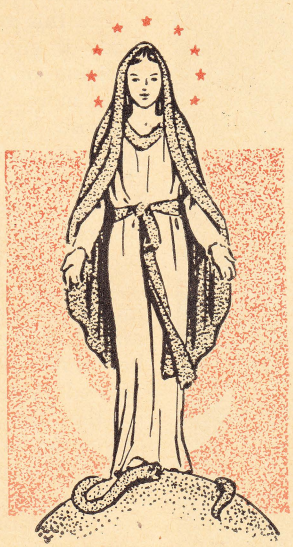
In the concrete, the Crusade aims at the spiritual rebirth of the more highly qualified Catholic elements of society, of priests especially, so as to make the Crusade most effective for the conversion of souls. To do this, a large house has been opened at Mondragone, near Rome, with the blessing of the Holy Father, to prepare apostles for the movement. Up to the end of January, 1955, one Cardinal, seventy-seven Archbishops and Bishops, two thousand priests and some hundreds of the laity had already attended the special conferences. The rhythm of the courses continues with ever-increasing speed. Those who have listened to them confess their own heartfelt awareness of the need of attending to personal holiness and apostolic zeal.

The Apostleship of Prayer could have no finer ideal than to help such a Crusade. It is hard to weigh the importance of historical events when they are close to us. Nevertheless, there are those who feel

that this new movement is the beginning of a new Counter-Reformation. While it is true that evil, in its most shameful and aggressive forms, has invaded every front where the Church is engaged, it is also true that the Mystical Body of Christ has at this time a multitude of holy members such as could hardly be found in her past history. Let them recognize one another, take courage from mutual contact, consider the best means for effective team work, rally to their bishops and to the Pope as an army full of enthusiasm and with ranks closed.

The glory of God and the happiness of the world are at stake. We must revise our plans for the spiritual conquest of the world. The movement must spread and deepen and identify itself with the very life of the Church. As the Pope so often says, the salvation of millions of souls depends upon it.

Apart from the splendor of the end to be won, there is another reason why we should join our prayers with all those who pray with the Crusade for a Better World. Against such a program the devil will let loose all his forces. He will realize how such a movement threatens the victory which, in recent times, he has gained over public life. This is all the more reason why the sons of God should throw themselves unstintingly into the fray. The devil trembles at the prospect of such an unprecedented defeat to his pride, and so it is our duty to concentrate all the fire of heaven against this satanic weakness. With this in mind, the Pope placed the Crusade, at the very beginning, under the leadership of the Blessed Virgin, who has crushed the serpent's head; and it is of her that he again spoke, in his Encyclical on her universal queenship, as the dawn of a new age.



"It is you, Madonna, who will unite us as brothers and sisters and give us to Christ."
—FATHER LOMBARDI

The army of those who pray must join strength with those who fight in the front line of battle. The Church is one. He who fights has need of him who prays, just as he who prays needs the support of the warrior, so that the "unutterable groanings" which the Holy Spirit rouses in his heart may be realized. The campaign for a better world needs much work and much prayer. Each must play the part which God gives to him. Prayer and sacrifice make a perfect combination in the divine holocaust.

The prayer necessary will be in proportion to the graces needed. Jesus redeemed the world on the Cross. Only the man who knows how to crucify himself with Christ can share in his work of redemption. Innocent children and all who suffer are invaluable to this kind of undertaking. The children can move the Heart of Jesus because they are so dear to Him. The sick can make up in their own bodies what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ.

We must all become one instrument for a better world, for a happier community, for a Jesus more widely recognized for his goodness and glory. If the Pope, through the Apostleship of Prayer, has approved the intention of the Crusade for a Better World, it is a sign that he attributes to it a position of prime importance in the modern scene. No one can be miss-

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ADVENT

Mary is the very personification of the season of Advent. When Our Lord is spoken of in the liturgy of those weeks of preparation, she is spoken of, too. We can learn much from the liturgy's presentation of her attitude during the time of her expectation of the birth of Jesus.

IN THE SPLENDOR of the Feast of Christmas, in the very heart of the celebration of that mystery which inaugurated the era of our salvation, Holy Mother Church pays special honor to Our Lady, who gave us the Son of her virginity, Christ the Saviour of the world. "Celebrating," says the Church in the *Communicantes* of the Canon of Christmas Mass, "this most holy day on which the unsullied virginity of the Blessed Mary gave to this world a Saviour." And so it can be well said that Christmas is, *par excellence,* the Feast of the Maternity of Our Lady.

For this very reason, namely, that Our Lady is given so intimate a part in the re-living of the mystery of the Nativity, it is more than proper that she should likewise have an extraordinarily special place in that season which prepares for that mystery. Mother of the Redeemer, hers was the privilege of preparing for his coming as no other creature could prepare for it.

From the very moment of her coming into the world, Our Lady prepared for the arrival of the Saviour. We know little of her childhood, but tradition has always insisted that, of all creatures, her desire for the Messias was most keen, her spirit of longing for his coming the most perfect. True, she could not, of herself and in the most proper meaning of the word, *merit* the Incarnation of the Son of God. But it is also true that, from all eternity, God determined that He would not take up his abode amongst us until there should be a place sufficiently pure and holy to receive

and Our Lady

By MARTIN BENEDICT

that coming. It was Our Lady who gave herself to God as that perfectly virginal soil, the spotless beauty of which was alone capable of bringing down the Heavenly Dew and from which the operation of the Holy Spirit should bring forth the Seed, the Root of Jesse—as the Scriptures and the liturgy call Him.

This, however, is true and must be insisted on. Our Lady's co-operation with the graces with which God endowed her from the first moment of her own conception in the womb of her holy mother, Anne, was such that the Church does not hesitate to use the word *merit* when speaking of her role in the Incarnation. The Collect for the Mass celebrated on the Octave of Christmas says quite plainly and with no apologies for the use of such a term that "we merited through her the Author of Life." No wonder the Church sees her as the perfect model for our Advent-waiting!

It is, of course, somewhat difficult for us to imagine just what were the thoughts which filled the heart of Our Lady during that time of her expectancy after she had conceived the Son of God in her womb. Certainly no creature ever waited, desired and prepared for the Redeemer as did the Mother of the Redeemer. Because of this, she is providentially qualified to introduce us into the mystery of Christmas. And because of this, too, as has been done above, we may well call Christmas not only the Feast of the Birthday of her Son, but also one of the most glorious of her own feasts.

Hymns to Our Lady

More to the point, however, is her place in Advent. From one end of that season to the other, we are constantly placed, and in manner most special, under her motherly and loving influence. For example, each day during this season in the Divine Office, the Church's official daily prayer, a special and most beautiful hymn, "Beloved Mother of the Redeemer," is sung at the end of the Divine Office. "Gate of Heaven" and "Star of the Sea" we call her in that hymn, and most earnestly do we beg of her to help us in our preparation for spiritual restoration.

Christ, who will be born in mystery in our hearts on Christmas, is the Saviour for whose coming she so perfectly prepared. Therefore do we invoke her aid as his Mother and ours, so that we may come to the celebration of his and her feast, Christmas, with the sort of dispositions which will enable us to profit to the fullest from our re-living with Him the mystery of his birth in time.

MODERN CHRISTMAS

The haste to seek the Christmas mart,
To choose the gift, to "deck the hall"!
But what of haste within the heart
To seek the lowly Christmas stall,
To deck it with the wreaths of prayer,
To spread love's incense through its air?
The Christmas carol sung with vim,
The square adorned with jeweled light!
But what a meager gift for Him
Whose birth the world recalls tonight,
This gaiety with but a dole
Of humble worship in the soul!

He goes (long after none would make
Fit room for Him) with wistful face
And thinks: "I still am made to take
The cold, the straw, the lesser place."

Adelaide Love

In days gone by, the whole city of Rome used to go to one church for the celebration of Mass on special days and greater feasts. On the first Sunday of Advent, the Stational Mass is that of St. Mary Major in Rome, for this was the biggest and most beautiful shrine to Our Lady in that city, the center of the Catholic world. Even today, our Missals still call our attention to the fact that, no

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IRISH CHRISTMAS CARD

After the couple disappeared into the night, Maury reproached himself for neglecting an old Irish custom. Rita, if she were alive, would have spoken to him about that. And she did speak to him; but not a word of reproach.

By RUSSELL GORDON CARTER

THE DAY BEFORE Christmas a strange thing happened to Maury O'Connor. On the morning of that gray, chill day he was tying his necktie in front of the bedroom window, and at the same time watching the flight of a seagull above the harbor, when the gull suddenly vanished, and he was looking at a little thatched cottage beside a quiet stream, and down the road a piece an ancient rounded stone bridge, and beyond the bridge a wide meadow, and beyond the meadow a purple mountain, and beyond the purple mountain yet another mountain, which was soft violet in the pale gold of the Christmas Eve sunset. And he knew that something about the cottage was wrong, but what it was he couldn't say.

Then the sunset vanished, and the cottage itself vanished, but the thought that something was wrong with it remained to trouble him, crowding temporarily from his mind the thing he had long been dreading: that on this Christmas Eve he would be utterly and desolately alone. With a final tug at his necktie, he said aloud, "I'd best get some hot food in me quick." For it was late, and he had a time-clock to punch. So he went downstairs and began to prepare breakfast in the small kitchen where, during the forty-one years of their marriage, Rita had prepared so many good and generous meals for the two of them . . .

Everyone at the factory knew, of course, that since the death of his wife less than a year ago Maury O'Connor was an unhappy man. Later in the day therefore, when the boss, George Deely, came over to Maury's battered desk in the supply room, his voice was restrained:

"Lookit, Maury, little enough work'll be done today by anybody, so take the rest of the afternoon off."

"Okay," Maury said, and he was push-

ing his tall, angular body upward when, glancing out the window, he saw the cottage for the second time . . .

"Maury, what'll you be doin' tonight?"

Maury blinked, and the cottage again vanished. Then he turned slowly toward the boss.

"What'll I be doin'?"

"I was thinkin', if you wanted to come over an' help the kids trim the tree—"

Maury winced and then smiled to hide the hurt within him. He and Rita had never been blessed with children, but they had always had a tree, and on Christmas Eve the two of them always used to trim it together.

"Kind of you, George, but I won't bother ye—"

"No bother at all!" Deely exclaimed. "We'd enjoy—"

"No!" Maury's voice was almost harsh because of the pain. Grabbing his coat and hat, he hurried out the door.

As he stepped into the street, the joy of Christmas was all about him: in the colored lights that festooned the buildings, in the pealing of distant bells and the voices of near-by carolers, in the first snowflakes lazily fluttering through the deepening twilight. The joy of Christmas was also in the crowded bus that he boarded. It didn't matter that people with bundles were jammed together so tight they could hardly move, or that the bus frequently jerked and threw everyone off balance: laughter and eager, excited conversation were all about him. But within him there were misery and the persistent memory of a little thatched cottage that had something wrong with it . . .

When he entered his own small, darkened house, Christmas seemed to enter with him, for on the bus a woman had somehow managed to get aboard with a young fir balsam, which had pressed against his coat, and the smell of the freshly trimmed branches was still in his nostrils. He hung his coat and hat in the closet and then went into the front room and sat down by the window.

The room was completely dark, but his memories were bright and sharp with pain, and Rita was at the center of them. Rita lighting a candle and placing it at the window beside which he was sitting. Rita with her black hair and blue eyes and her rich West Country voice. Rita in the midst of night-before preparations for a good Christmas dinner, yet also finding the time to place a sprig of holly here and a spray of evergreen there. Finding time also to do up the few presents so nicely, and even to write a Christmas card that would surprise him beside his breakfast plate on Christmas morning . . .

Maury covered his face with his hands. "I'll have a bite to eat," he thought, "then I'll go to bed!"

He had lowered his hands and was about to rise from the chair when he noticed a man and a woman out on the sidewalk, the two of them just standing there looking uncertainly this way and that: the man in a long gray coat and no hat at all and a beard covering the whole lower part of his face, and the woman in a flowing cloak that glinted blue with the snowflakes on it, and a wispy blue scarf over her head.

As Maury pushed himself to his feet he

Ballad for the Holy Father

(In the mountain manner)

Jesus in the manger lay,
Cold and naked, He.
Two small bluebirds flew that way;
Him the birds did see.

"Why," they said, "He has no shoes,
For to keep Him warm."
Forthwith they, no time to lose,
Did the manger storm.

Darted down and laid their breasts
On his naked toes;
Hovered there, while Mary's guests
Her their treasures showed.

Mary turned and saw the wings,
Blue as was her cloak,
Nestled on the little King—
Tears did fill her throat.

"God," she asked, "please let their song
Be a hymn of praise;
Let them sing their whole life long,
Of this day of days!"

Then the birds began to trill,
Low and thin and clear;
We were born to do his will
And to Christ be dear.

Lillian Oliver Carroll

seemed to hear Rita's voice: "Oh, Maury, they've missed their way! Go an' see if ye can help 'em!"

Striding to the door, he opened it and stepped onto the porch, but to his astonishment, the two were nowhere in sight either up or down the street.

As he re-entered the house, it was as if he again heard the voice of his wife: "What a shame now, Maury! If there'd only been a candle at the window, they'd have come an' asked directions."

Maury stood motionless, filled with a feeling of remorse.

"I should have lit a candle!" he murmured to himself.

Then he put on his coat and hat again and hurried forth in quest of the couple. They couldn't be far away.

The snow had increased, and the wind from the east swept it obliquely downward. With head bent, he strode in the direction whence the wind was blowing. Only a few people were on the street, and those of whom he made inquiry had seen nothing of a man and a woman dressed as he described them. Everybody seemed in a hurry to get home.

Maury continued onward, not at all sure he was going in the right direction, for now in front of him the bare street stretched away toward the harbor. He was thinking of turning back when, under an arc lamp, he came face to face with a shabbily dressed small boy, and it seemed to Maury he had never seen a boy who looked so wonderfully happy as this one.

"Tell me, m' lad," he asked, "did ye notice a man an' a woman with an odd look about them—"

"Yeah!" the boy exclaimed. "He had a beard an' no hat, an' they both wore long coats or somethin', an' gosh, the nice way she smiled at me! Nobody ever smiled at me like that before! I—gosh, it made me feel swell!'

"Which way did they go?"

"That way." And the boy pointed toward the harbor.

SOON TO APPEAR

HUNGRY RIVER

by Deusa Marques Menezes

"Thank you," Maury said.

"Merry Christmas, Mister!"

Then Maury was hurrying against the increasing force of the wind, and in a few minutes he was beyond the last houses and at the edge of the curving municipal park with its bandstand and benches overlooking the harbor; and in front of him he could see two sets of footprints, a man's and a woman's, and they led straight across the park toward the beach and the dark water.

"Why now," he wondered, "would two people be down here unless—"

He swallowed hard and shook his head unhappily from side to side, remembering his failure to light the candle. Then once more he seemed to hear the voice of Rita:

"Oh, Maury, likely their relations are all of a worry over them! Do try an' find 'em!"

So he followed the footprints across the park, and thence across the beach to the water's edge, where they ended as if the couple had walked right into the water itself. Hunched and shivering, he looked this way and that, and everywhere he saw lights: out in the harbor and on the little islands that dotted it, on the distant shore and in the houses in the direction whence he had come—Christmas lights, blue and green and red and gold—but within himself there was darkness and a deepening despair.

"Where are they?" he murmured. "Nobody in his senses would walk right into the water! Where are they? Oh, I want to find them!" Then so great was the misery upon him that he cried aloud, "What on earth can I do?"

The answer came as if on the wind booming in from the sea: "Always, Maury O'Connor, you can pray!"

So there on the snow-covered sand beside an old bench, Maury went to his knees, and he prayed that somehow he might find the lost couple and help them. While he prayed, the wind became less violent and the cold less penetrating . . . and when at last he opened his eyes he was not kneeling on a snowy beach at all, but on a brown, rutted road, and the mellow glow from a winter sunset gilded the open countryside all round him.

Standing erect, Maury knew, without knowing how he knew, that this was the West Coast of Ireland, and the county

was Kerry, and that pleased him, for Rita had been born there, and somehow it didn't seem the least bit odd that he himself should be there now on Christmas Eve. The only thing that troubled him was the loneliness.

"Where would everyone be?" he asked himself. Then he thought, "If I follow the road, likely I'll meet somebody."

He set off along it, but he had gone only a short distance when, coming up out of a hollow, he uttered a faint gasp, while the two eyes of him went wide with wonder. For the strange thing that had happened while he was watching the flight of the seagull, and then again after the boss had spoken to him, had happened once more! There ahead of him was the little thatched cottage beside the quiet stream, and down the road a piece the ancient, rounded stone bridge, and beyond the bridge the wide meadow, and beyond the meadow the purple mountain, and beyond the purple mountain yet another mountain, which was soft violet in the pale gold of the Christmas Eve sunset.

BUT NOW HE knew what was wrong with the cottage: there was no candle in the window.

"Oh," he thought, "I must put one there! An' I hope I'm not too late, because likely somebody'll be comin' across the bridge, an' they'll be needin' help." The crunching of his feet sounded on the road as he quickened his steps till he was running.

He arrived out of breath at the cottage, but he didn't knock at the door, because it was already open an inch or two and he knew the place was empty. Ah, the wonderful smell of it! Even in his hurried search for a candle he paused to sniff the pleasant mustiness of old thatch above him and the sharp odor of burned turf in the wide fireplace, and also the tang of years of cooking; and he knew that good people had once lived here and that good people would live here again. Somewhere now there must be a candle! No matter that the place was without furniture, somewhere there was a candle and he must find it. Round and round he went, bending low to reach into corners, stretching high to touch a beam . . . round and round while the sunset faded and the first stars appeared.

Sowing the Seed

A word spoken is sometimes treasured in the soul like a seed in the ground. What a nun once said in the classroom was remembered ever afterwards by a convict now in Dannemora prison, where he helped in the building of the Good Thief Chapel. He wrote to us to say:

"Those of us who worked on the erection of the Good Thief Chapel were inspired by St. Dismas, and the great reward he received from God, eternal happiness. It was not really work; it was a labor of love. Every stone that was laid was an Act of Contrition.

"It was forty years ago, in a classroom at St. Veronica's in Greenwich Village, that a nun told me about St. Dismas. She caught me stealing some change from her desk. I stole many things after that, but I always remember the little nun, and her story of St. Dismas.

"Across the street on Washington Street, the big U.S. Customs Building was our favorite hang-out while waiting for school to open. Years later I learned that the granite blocks at the base of this building were hewn from a stone quarry here at Dannemora. I never dreamed then that one day I would feel the mates of these same granite blocks up here, the same blocks used in the Good Thief Chapel.

"During twenty-five years of incarceration, I have never given up hope of God's love or his forgiveness."

Halting at last to peer from a small window, he thought, "What if somebody was to come now?" And squinting beyond the bridge, he fancied he saw two people on their way toward it.

Again he began to search, groping in new places, groping in the old places over and over . . . until finally, standing helpless beside the window, he looked again toward the bridge, and now he was certain he saw two people in the starlight, a man and a woman.

Then for the second time he cried, "What can I do?"

And the answer came as before: "Always, Maury O'Connor, you can pray!"

So again he went to his knees . . . And when he rose to his feet, there directly in front of him in a niche in the rough stones

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YOURS *for the Asking*

GEORGE W. LEE, S.J.
Air Force Veteran

IF YOU'RE ABOUT as happy in the Service as a cow on Fifth Avenue, nine times out of nine you'll blame your job, your companions or your C.O. In other words, you'll blame your surroundings and those you rub elbows with.

Perhaps you're located half-way between "Nowhere" and "Never Was." Suppose your C.O. is training you to be an understudy for an ape. Maybe your companions make the village idiot look like a quiz kid. "A set-up like mine would dim the optimism of an angel," you say.

But how about "Red" Mosley—the kid that bailed out of his burning plane over Korea and wandered about in the ice and snow until his hands and feet were oversized ice cubes? At twenty-two, Red's outlook was no hands and no feet. "Not good," you say. But his reaction was: "I won't let this get me down." He didn't, and today he's leading a happy life.

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THE LATCH RATTLED, the storm door banged back against the farmhouse clapboards, the kitchen door kicked open, and of course it was Beth, with snowflakes in her hair and a hot mince pie for his father for Christmas. Or anyhow, she'd *say* it was for his father.

Jeff turned resignedly from a small mirror over the old cast-iron sink; the silly little tie he was trying to fit under the collar of his boiled shirt was dangling, but otherwise he looked a lot handsomer than he ever had in overalls or a mail-order Sunday suit. The expression in Beth's eyes made him so hot under the collar that he was afraid the darn thing would burst into flame.

What she said was, for Beth, unexpectedly crisp: "You're not going anywhere *tonight*?"

"Some of the fellows in the frat are throwing a party in town," he explained.

"On Christmas Eve? But, Jeff—the radio says more snow. What if they can't keep the roads open, and your father—?"

"I'll get back. Dad will be all right."

He turned back to the mirror, hiding his resentment. She hadn't liked the frat, when he told her he was planning to join it; she said the fellows weren't his type. She didn't want him to make friends at college; just wanted him to work hard, finish his two-year agriculture course, and then come home and run his father's dairy farm, now that Dad wasn't well enough to do it himself. He fully expected to do that, but he'd pick his own friends—and his own wife!

"Let me fix it," she said, over his shoulder, and he realized she was trying to apologize for interfering about the party.

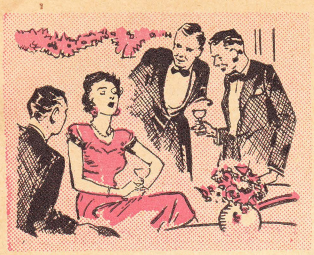
So he gave her the little black bow and stood like a fool while she tucked it under his collar. The whole get-up made him feel as stiff as a board, but it did look good. Estelle would be impressed.

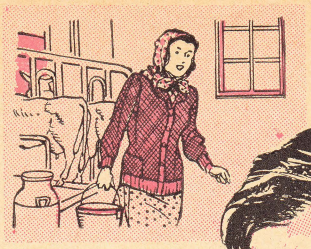
"There! You look wonderful," Beth said, leaning back on her heels to see.

But the shining eyes he was looking down into were Estelle's: blue, not brown, and not nearly so easy to read.

"I'll just go up and wish your father a happy Christmas," Beth said. "I suppose you've got him in bed?"

"Yes." Irritated again, Jeff scowled at her. Of course he'd got his father fixed up for the night. And done all his chores, too.





Return of the Wise Man

By OWENITA SANDERLIN

Jeff was a farmer—a very handsome one. He was dressing up for the Christmas Eve party —and for Estelle. But Beth tied the knot.

He only hoped he didn't smell of the hay he'd been pitching in the barn till half an hour ago. And she needn't worry, he'd be home in time to milk the cows.

"And—merry Christmas to *you*," Beth said reproachfully.

He had the grace to feel ashamed, and for a moment he thought of the girl next door who had come almost every day since his mother died (Beth was only a kid in pigtails, then) to see what she could do for him and his Dad. She was a lovely girl, and would make some farmer a wonderful wife. But her plain dark hair and serious brown eyes, and the sort of dress she would probably wear, would be way out of place at the party he was going to tonight. The chivalrous, big-brotherly thought of taking her was just a Christmas impulse; it would never work out.

So he just said, "Merry Christmas, Beth! We can't ever thank you for all you've done for us!"

Beth was almost out of the room when she turned back to him.

"All I've done?" she repeated, almost fiercely. "You think I've minded sewing patches on your knees, buttons on your shirts, baking pies? That wasn't anything. But I knew all the time what it would mean in the end. That was the hard part!"

"What it would mean in the end?" Jeff asked stupidly.

But she was gone, upstairs to see his Dad, and he was relieved, because in another minute she might burst out crying. What would *what* mean in the end? He shook his head unhappily. It worried him to think of this debt he could never pay, and the love he couldn't return. A girl like Beth deserved the best—and he'd see that she got it, too. He'd introduce her to someone—a real nice fellow—

The horn that blared out in the snowy road was a welcome substitute for a troubled conscience. He wrestled himself into the sheepskin coat that was never meant to go over a dress suit, and called up a good-night to his Dad. Beth would lock the door after her when she left—they must be listening to the Christmas music on the radio—

"Oh, come, let us adore Him . . ."

The carols died away as he let himself out the storm door and hurried down the path he'd shoveled in the afternoon; it was

almost a tunnel, with snow piled three feet high on either side. If there were more snow tonight, as Beth had warned—but the plows would keep the road clear. They always did.

The fellows waiting for him in the car were singing "Sweet Adeline," pretending to be drunk, but they were good guys. They never drank anything stronger than beer, and he didn't care for the stuff himself. He reminded himself not to forget and eat anything after midnight; he had never missed receiving Communion on Christmas, but he was the only Catholic in the bunch, so it was up to him to remember.

He didn't ask them who was bringing Estelle, but they knew he wanted to know, so right away they started kidding him about her.

"Hey, did you know Estelle isn't coming to the party?"

"Sure she's coming, but I doubt if any of us guys rates a dance."

"She's bringing a Yale man, I think—"

"But wait'll she sees Jeff! Man, I bet she won't be able to take her eyes off him in that suit."

Larry was kind enough not to mention that it was his brother's suit, lent for the occasion, and Jeff grinned his appreciation. They sure were good to him. A swell bunch of fellows. After three months at State College he still couldn't see why his father was always harping on the pitfalls of a secular education. Dad was always reproaching himself; if he hadn't been crippled by arthritis, he kept saying, Jeff could have gone to a good Catholic college. But the State campus was only fifteen miles from the farm, and where, Jeff kept asking his Dad, could you get better training in agriculture?

"That's something I'm afraid ye'll never know, now," his father would say, shaking his head at Beth, who would, like as not, be standing by, nodding her head in solemn agreement.

Wouldn't they be surprised if he came through with a couple of converts for the Church, now? Larry was interested, always asking questions, and Jeff had cleared up some of the crazy notions a lot of the fellows seemed to have about Catholicism.

"Two bits for your thoughts," Larry teased. "I bet anything you want she's wearing a strapless formal."

Jeff was glad it was dark; he was the only man in the crowd who blushed. "Dairymaid complexion," Larry had said, the first time it happened. But only once. The next day he had a black eye—and an abiding respect for farmers . . .

ESTELLE *was* wearing a strapless formal, but Jeff only got a hazy notion of what she was wearing. She stood at the edge of the small night-club dance floor in a moonlit cloud, with stars in her hair, and, wonder of wonders, she seemed to be waiting for *him*. When he asked her—did he ask her, or did it just happen?—to dance, she drifted through a haze of delicious perfume into his arms.

He didn't count the dances, only steered her away from any intervening masculine faces, ignored the taps on his shoulder, and marveled that she wanted it that way. They didn't talk—she didn't seem to mind that either—until the music stopped longer than usual, and he realized that it must be intermission. He must get her refreshments—something to drink?

"Where did you learn to dance like that?" she asked him, and he said, "I don't know. From you, I guess!" And they laughed. He never had been able to dance like that before.

But Larry came, and some of the other fellows with some girls Estelle knew, and they got to talking; the delicious mist which had enveloped and isolated them from the crowd seemed to evaporate. Estelle began to look and sound more human—of course, Jeff wanted her to be human!—and he began to be able to pick out details.

The dress, for instance, the moonlit cloud. No, Beth wouldn't have worn anything like that. Neither would Estelle, he thought, if she had had the right sort of parents to take care of her. Larry had told him her parents were divorced; she lived with an aunt. Poor kid.

Her eyes danced up at him, over the cup of punch he had brought her through

WATCH FOR
REMEMBRANCE DAY
by Matt Taylor

the crowds around the big cut-glass bowl; her hair, he thought, was like spun gold. One more detail.

"You didn't spike it, did you?" Teeth like pearls, a laughing mouth. "Larry! Haven't you got something to put a little flavor into this punch?"

Larry had, but it was almost twelve o'clock, so Jeff didn't drink any more. Maybe that was why he seemed to be shrinking back, out of the gay circle, just an onlooker. But he ought to get her out of this, he thought, angrily. It wasn't her fault. She didn't have enough experience to know the danger.

"Get your coat!" he told her.

He'd show her something better. She loved him, she would want to come.

"My *coat*? But *why*?"

He should have known better than to tell them where he was planning to take her; and he certainly should have known better than to ask people like that to come along.

"This is no place to be on Christmas Eve," he heard himself saying earnestly. "Come on, fellows, let me take you to Midnight Mass!"

"Leave the party to go to *church*?" Estelle asked, incredulously.

"Yes. You don't know how beautiful it is. You should see the manger, at least—"

Their laughter washed over him, the babble of their voices cut him off. "O little town of Bethlehem!" "The Virgin Mary?" "He's a Catholic, you know—he believes in the Virgin Birth."

"The Virgin Birth?" That was Estelle's voice, tipsy with ridicule—the last detail. Sick with shame, Jeff stood up and fought his way out of the place . . .

The snow was so thick that it seemed to stream down from the sky, as Jeff walked blindly, bareheaded, in the direction of home. Questions he hadn't bothered with before, questions that had made him angry when Beth brought them up, bothered him now. Even if nothing had happened, and he had waited for the other fellows to drive him home, when would they have done it? They would have laughed at the idea of having to get back long before daylight—to milk a bunch of cows! And if he wasn't home, would his father struggle out to the cold barn, with his crippled hands—?

He walked faster, and prayed; the snow drove into his face for an hour more, and then the deluge let up; by three o'clock there were only a few fine white flecks in the sky. In another half-hour, a few faint stars appeared, scarcely distinguishable from the crystals of snow. But in the east, directly ahead of him, one star shone brighter than the rest.

He walked faster, filling his lungs with the clean, frosty air. "O holy night . . ."

He wasn't singing, yet music seemed to fill the dark sky . . . "O night divine . . ."

The light of the morning star, the Christmas star, glimmered on the snowy roofs of the clustered gray buildings at the end of the road, and he couldn't believe they were no more than his father's house, his father's barn.

But he was too late. There was a light inside the barn, too. His father?

No. Not an old man. A lovely lady, her dark hair covered with a silken kerchief, kneeling with the cattle in the stalls. Hadn't he read somewhere that on Christmas Eve the beasts could talk, as they knelt before the Manger?

He was confused, exhausted by the long walk through the heavy snow, or he would

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The Sacred Heart

An Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart is made with the intention of honoring the Divine Heart, which is the seat of all virtues, the fountain of all blessings, and the refuge of all holy souls. The chief virtues which we seek to honor in this Heart are: firstly, a most tender love of God his Father, joined to perfect reverence and humility; secondly, an infinite patience under afflictions, an unspeakable grief and loathing for the sins He had taken upon Himself, the confidence of a most tender Son, and at the same time, shame and confusion for the guilt of the world; thirdly, a most sensitive compassion for our wretchedness. Yet despite these emotions, each of which reached the very depths of his Heart, an unalterable serenity, caused by so perfect a conformity to the will of God that no event whatsoever, no matter how contrary in appearance to its zeal, love and humility, could in any way disturb it.

Blessed Claude de la Colombière

As it looked at Our Lord, scourged and crowned with thorns, the world was really looking at itself through the eyes of God.

Ecce Homo

By BRIAN McCLURE

When Herod sent Jesus back to the governor's palace, Pilate assembled the chief priests and rulers of the people to tell them that neither he nor Herod had found Our Lord guilty "as touching those things of which you accuse Him." When the Jews had shouted down this decision, Pilate repeated the acquittal. "I find no crime deserving of death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and release Him."

The chastisement was to be scourging with the Roman lash, a whip fashioned of leather thongs, weighted near the ends with lead or bone. That it could inflict unbelievable pain is indicated by the verbs which give language to this ordeal. The Romans spoke of the scourge as cutting, tearing, breaking, pounding, piercing and digging the flesh of its victims. Roman law allowed men to whip their slaves, and in the provinces the lash often fell on the backs of free men. But those who, like St. Paul, were Roman citizens could not be struck save with rods, and then only after having been condemned to death. Our Lord was not a Roman citizen. "Pilate then took Jesus and had Him scourged." It is John who tells us this.

As the soldiers lead their Victim into the palace and strip Him of his garments, our stunned minds grapple with the words of Pilate, refusing to accept their logic. If Our Lord was innocent and to be let go, why was He first to be scourged? It was

The crown and the royal robe were symbols of worldly power and of the hunger in men's souls for greatness. To put them on Christ was a protest against the folly of greed for power—one of the detestable sins for which Christ was making reparation.

the custom of Rome to scourge men before crucifying them, not before acquitting them. How are we to account for those words: "I will therefore chastise Him and release Him"?

The scourging ordered by Pilate was not a preliminary to crucifixion, but an attempt on the part of the governor to save Christ from it; it was a compromise tossed to the Jews in an effort to satisfy their lust

for Our Lord's Blood. It bespoke, in a way, the justice of Pilate; he did not want to crucify an innocent Man. But it also betrayed his weakness. In the face of trouble, he did not have the courage to free Him.

Because Pilate was weak, Our Lord was bound with his face to a column, hands outstretched above Him, while two soldiers, one on each side, whipped Him to blood. The mute witness of his shroud testifies to sixty blows, not counting those which did not break his sacred flesh. And the weakness of Pilate, the

THE SONGS OF SORROW

2. The Scourging at the Pillar

The sharp-toothed whip is gnawing at his flesh,
A hungry wolf that must be fed on pain.
It rips and tears his back;
Its greedy mouth is dripping with his Blood.
The air shrieks
With the whistle of the leather,
The lash upon his back,
The bite upon the bone.
The gentle Slave, heaven's Fugitive, is silent,
Tied to his post of pain,
His twitching Body greeting every blow
With love
For the hand that wields the whip.
And every stroke
That sings its wild song upon his tattered back
Echoes in Mary's heart with voiceless pain.
The whip falls weary to the Blood-splashed ground.
They drag the throbbing, bleeding Lamb away.
And in the quiet courtyard, the early sun
Finds two lonely shadows left behind:
A whipping post encircled
By a Mother's trembling arms.

3. The Crowning with Thorns

They have woven Him a crown,
They have plaited it with pain;
They stripped the branch of flowers;
They threw away the flowers,
And kept the bitter thorn.

They twisted it with cunning
(They were careful with their hands),
Till it was a woven crown;
Till it twisted and it turned
Into a crown of bitter thorn.

How we gathered in the branches,
Kept them hidden from the sun;
Swiftly wove them in the shadow
From the peering eyes of day.

Not a proud thing to have fashioned;
We were glad to see it done,
And our fingers still were aching
When they carried it away.

They have crowned Him with the thorns
And his hair is wet with Blood,
And his brow is wet with Blood,
And it trickles down his cheeks,
And it swims into his eyes.

He is robed in royal purple,
With a scepter in his hands
And a crown upon his head.
Behold the Man! Behold the King!
Mother, behold thy Son!

Thomas J. Horan, Jr.

nakedness of Christ, the awful beating to pulp of the most beautiful of the sons of men, suggests that at this point in his sacred passion Our Lord took upon Himself all the iniquity of weakened flesh. Men have sought to chrism their bodies with luxuriousness, they have poured over themselves the perfumes of sensuality, they have relaxed on the soft couches of forbidden delights. But to eyes which have looked upon the beaten Christ, they are lepers. There is no beauty in them, nor is there any place where they can lay down their bruised and bloody limbs to rest.

Robed, Crowned, Sceptered

When the soldiers had done with this cruel punishment, they cut the bonds which held Jesus to the pillar and threw his garments at his feet. With difficulty He put them on. Perhaps because no officer presided over the scourging, Our Lord was not returned immediately to the presence of the governor. There was a lull while the cohort waited for instructions. The efforts of Our Lord to dress Himself did not hold their calloused attention.

Piled in the corner of the courtyard was a heap of firewood; not cordage of ash or oak cut from the forest, but brush grubbed from the farms, a thorny weed good for a quick, hot fire. Out of those thorns a cruel thought was born. Here we have the King of the Jews; let us put a crown upon his head.

A notion like that would galvanize the Roman legionary to quick action. It would be his kind of diversion, a rough man's idea of sport. The garrison which kept order in the Holy City was made up of Samaritans and Greeks from Syria. They had a soldier's awe for authority; they had the soldier's ridicule and coarse laughter for the pseudo king, for the one who could not back up his words. Here in their power was a great Pretender, broken to proper meekness under the lash, who claimed to be—of all things—King of the Jews. A sorry King, lording it over a sorry people.

The props needed for their little pantomime were close at hand. Out of the thorns they plaited a kind of bonnet which they beat to fit on his sacred head and tied with a band of twisted greenwood, from the back of his neck to his brow, so as to hold the crown down. Over his shoulders they threw the shreds of royalty, a purple cloak from common stock. Into his hand they thrust a reed for a scepter.

"And the soldiers, plaiting a crown of thorns, put it upon his head, and arrayed Him in a purple cloak. And they kept coming to Him and saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and striking Him."

On the night before, when the Sanhedrin had condemned Christ to death, they spit upon Him and, binding his eyes, they challenged Him to tell who it was that struck—because He claimed to be the Son of God. That morning, when Herod held his life in the palm of his hand, he and his army mocked Him for a fool and robed Him with the white cloak of the *candidatus*—because He aspired to a Kingship far above his stature. Now the soldiers of Rome's great army complete the triple genuflection. Mockery they meant it to be; tribute it really was. For every word of theirs and every gesture fulfilled the prophecy of Jesus in detail. "He will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and scourged and spit upon; and after they have scourged Him, they will put Him to death; and on the third day He will rise again." They paid homage to more than they knew. They robed and crowned and staffed and bent the knee to Him who knows all things—even what they will do—and suffers it out of love. It was to that they paid unconscious tribute.

Reparation for Our Sins

Nor was their mockery the thing they meant it to be, in the deeper realities of the passion. If we remember that Christ, all through these hours, was taking upon Himself the sins of men, externalizing them as it were, bringing to visibility in Himself the hideousness of men's invisible souls, it will not surprise us that men should mock what otherwise they would love when they see it as it truly is.

For the reed and the robe and the crown of thorns and the Blood which shone on the face of Christ were true symbols of worldly power, of the hunger in the souls of men for greatness. Before his fall, Adam was great; and should our eyes have seen him in his innocence, what would have kept us from adoring him? He was the image of God. Sin cut

him down to littleness, but left in the human race a hunger for the greatness swept away. That is why men are jealous of honor, resent disesteem; that is why they cannot stand to be ignored. Wealth, ability, and especially power, bring to a man the homage of others: a false glory, for man is great because of what he is, not because of what he has.

Lust for Power

This lust for power, all that kingship symbolizes, is the fertile mother of injustice and bloodshed, the miseries of war, the awful agonies of oppression. St. John called it the concupiscence of the eyes. Because it is the antithesis of God, Christ exposed it against the background of Himself in this hour of his passion; and the soldiers, seeing it for what it was worth, paid it the tribute it deserved.

The scourging and crowning of thorns took place within the praetorium, out of sight of the people. Pilate hoped that the spectacle of Jesus, broken and bloody, would satisfy the Jews. They would not be able to see the effects of the lash on his back and legs, nor the Blood which was drying into his clothes beneath the purple cloak which hung from his shoulders. But they could see his face. They would be able to see the tricklets of Blood flowing down from his head through the thorns and the greenwood; and beneath the Blood, the awful gauntness of his countenance framed by the blood-soaked tangle of his hair and beard. Hate does not usually survive the collapse of its victim.

"Pilate therefore again went outside and said to them, 'Behold, I bring Him out to you, that you may know that I find no guilt in Him.' Jesus therefore came forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak."

There is drama, and perhaps mysterious meaning, in the picture of Pilate and Jesus standing in the focus of those eyes which looked up at them from below. "Behold the Man!" The words slipped from Pilate's lips without premeditation. He might just as easily have used another expression. Why did he not say, "Behold your King"? Why did he not call the Nazarene by name, "Look well at Jesus of Nazareth"? Was there any special reason why Pilate used the Latin word, *homo,* which means man in general, and not *vir,* which distinguishes a man from a woman? *Ecce Homo!*

At the council which followed the raising of Lazarus, Caiphas spoke to say that "it is expedient for us that one man die for the people, instead of the whole nation perishing." St. John then tells us that this he said *not of himself,* "but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was to die for the nation." There was meaning to his words which Caiphas himself had not intended, but which God intended.

Holy Writ makes no like comment in its terse description of the *Ecce Homo.* But, as we read, the thought comes of itself that the words which Pilate used mean more than he intended. Surely, as they fell upon the ears of Jesus, who could not forget that He was laying upon Himself the sins of us all, the choice of word would fit into the pattern of his thought. To Pilate and the Jews, the passion was a trial and execution. To Jesus it was the Sacrifice of Redemption. He stood before his people as the Victim of sin. Looking at Him, they saw what Isaias said they would see.

"There is no beauty in Him, nor comeliness: and we have seen Him, and there was no sightliness, that we should be desirous of Him. Despised and the most

Continued on page 64

The Morning Offering

For the month of December

O JESUS, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer Thee my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of thy Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, for the intentions of all our Associates and in particular for a better world.

A Bishop

AMONG THE MANY legends of the Western Church, one concerns a saintly priest. This priest prayed that he might know whether there was on earth a soul as holy as St. Anthony of the Desert. One night he had a dream. His guardian angel appeared to him and motioned the priest to follow. They passed through many cities till finally they came to a small town near Rome. The priest and his angelic guide walked through its streets to a little house on the edge of the town. They entered the closed doors of the house—this was a dream, remember.

"There," said the angel, pointing across the room, "is one who is as holy in the sight of God as St. Anthony."

They saw only a tired mother surrounded by four small children, busy about her household duties.

Like the priest, a mother, too, can offer her life as a sacrifice in the way Our Divine Lord offered his for the redemption of the whole world.

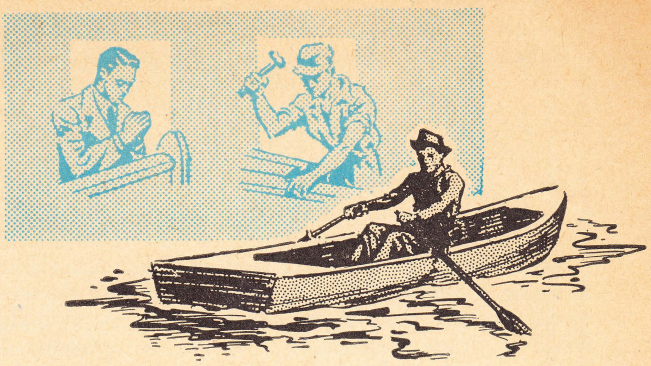
Fact or fiction, this incident could have happened. Here was a busy mother with no more spare time than to kneel down and say her morning and night prayers. Yet there was no need for her to spend much time on her knees. Her whole day was a prayer. She was not able to practise the mortifications and prayers of St. Anthony of the Desert. Nevertheless, the spirit with which she performed her simple duties was as pleasing to God as the austerities of the great saint. It was not so much what she did but what she wished to do that counted. For "God does not regard what is given but out of how much love it is given."

This mother had acquired in a very special way purity of intention in all her actions. It was the secret of her holiness. Just as the structure of a building rests on a firm foundation, so the whole spiritual life rests on the virtues—and the virtues in their turn are founded on the right and pure intention of the heart.

Someone has said that "the only misfortune in the life of a Christian is not to become a saint." Christ felt that way about it. He didn't merely tell you to be good. He said, "You, therefore, are to be perfect, even as your Heavenly Father is perfect" (St. Matthew v, 48).

Your immediate reaction to these words might be, "Who, me? I'm not cut out to be a saint." Well, for one thing, Christ never commands the impossible. For another, while there is no short cut to sanctity, there are means of attaining it. The only fundamental condition is that we have purity of intention in all our actions.

In this radio address, delivered on the Feast of the Sacred Heart last June, Bishop Casey spoke on the Apostleship of Prayer as a way of life, a way of holiness. Like the man in the boat, we need two oars to keep us headed in the right direction—prayer and work. By prayer, we consecrate all our actions to the Sacred Heart.



Speaks

By the Most Rev. LAWRENCE B. CASEY, D.D.
Auxiliary Bishop of Rochester

The servant of God lives a full day of twenty-four hours, since he occupies it all doing the will of God. His work, his recreation, his very meals—even his sleep—are not empty and useless hours—since he directs them all to the greater honor and glory of God.

I'd like to tell you about one practical way in which you can do this and thus become better and more Christlike people. This method of acquiring holiness is called the Apostleship of Prayer. The Apostleship is not a church organization as such. There are no regular meetings, no dues and no social activities. The Apostleship of Prayer, very simply, is a union of the Faithful—priests, Sisters, lay people, young and old—joining in prayer for the purpose of saving their own souls and extending the reign of Christ the King on earth.

The Morning Offering

The program involves the offering of each day with all its thoughts, words and actions to Christ. We prove our love for Christ by trying to please Him in every action we perform. These actions, no matter how trivial (washing the dishes, mowing the lawn, driving a truck, walking to the bus), take on an added value when united with the offering of Christ to his Father in the Mass. Such an offering, when sincere, is the most direct road to holiness.

The First Practice of the Apostleship of Prayer is the recitation of the Morning Offering. You can make up the words of this prayer yourself, or you may use the prayer in the little *Leaflet* which the Apostleship sends out each month to its members. During the month of June, it goes this way: "O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer Thee my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of thy Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, for the intentions of all our Associates, and in particular for doctors and nurses." (Each month this last intention is different).

This Morning Offering becomes a vital part of our day once we realize there are great riches within our reach. It is not merely a prayer to be recited but a way of life. Too many of our people lead their personal, family, business and social lives as if these were completely distinct from—and unconnected with—their Catholic Faith. The Morning Offering gives direction and purpose to our day. After all, what is prayer? "Chiefly the taking of a direction. A person fixes his thoughts, words, mind, heart, even his acts and his gestures, and the lightest and most meaningless of them at that, towards the Light that gives them worth."

The head of a certain monastic Order heard that one of his monks was critical of the Order's motto, "Pray and work." So he invited the young man to go rowing with him, and took the oars himself, using only one of them. After a time the skeptical monk shook his head and said, "But if you continue using that one oar, you'll keep on going around in circles and won't get anywhere."

"That's right, son," replied his Superior. "One oar is called prayer, and the other is called work. Unless you use both at the same time, you go in circles and don't get anywhere." So it is in our own lives. Prayer gives direction and purpose.

Three Practices

It is interesting to observe that Catholics who are faithful members of the Apostleship of Prayer don't stop at the Morning Offering. Their spiritual vision opens up and their appreciation of the world of grace deepens. It is easier for them to take on the Second Practice of the Apostleship—the monthly Mass and Communion of Reparation, and in many cases acquire the habit of daily Mass. If it is impossible for them, because of their work or home duties, to get to Mass each day, they mentally unite themselves with the Holy Sacrifice as it is offered throughout the world. But the members do make a point of receiving Holy Communion once each month in a spirit of reparation for their own sins and for the sins of others, thereby imploring divine mercy upon a sinful world.

Recognizing most fully the Blessed Virgin as their Mother and as advocate before God, one whose intercession lends special efficacy to our prayers, the members have recourse to her Immaculate and maternal Heart. Through her they direct their daily Offering to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to God the Father.

And since it is through the Immaculate Heart of Mary that we make our Daily Offering, the Apostleship cultivates special devotion to Mary under that title, and urges the daily recitation of a decade of the rosary, or the entire rosary if possible.

You of my audience who are already members of the Apostleship of Prayer know that these three Practices are not obligatory under pain of sin. However, you know from past experience that if you go half-way with the Lord, and open your heart to the impulses of his grace, these Practices will soon become second nature to you—and that will be a fortunate day for you, because the Apostleship of Prayer, actually lived out in your lives, will bring you the essential ingredient of happiness—the peace of soul which comes from doing the will of God.

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart, to which the Diocese of Rochester and its Cathedral are dedicated. The Apostleship of Prayer can play a real part in stimulating our devotion to the Sacred Heart, for this reason: Our union with Christ by prayer and sacrifice can only be accomplished when there is mutual love between Christ and ourselves. But Christ's own heart is both the symbol and the fount of this love. Hence the Apostleship of Prayer promotes devotion to the Sacred Heart in every way.

Our Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, said recently, "Rightly and deservedly can the Apostleship be called the perfect form of devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus; this devotion, moreover, can in no wise be separated from the Apostleship of Prayer." This is an added reason for you to join the Apostleship if you do not already belong, to be more fervent in observing the three Practices if you are now a member. May the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost descend upon all of you and remain forever.

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Apostleship of Prayer

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BOSTON
REV. THOMAS P. FAY, S.J.
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Mount St. Michael's, Spokane 28, Wash.

FAR WEST
REV. PETER H. NEWPORT, S.J.
2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco 17, Calif.

Merry Christmas!

By FRANCIS P. LeBUFFE, S.J.

Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people; for this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. **St. Luke ii, 10, 11**

CHRISTMAS DAY IS HERE and once again we kneel near the manger-crib of our Infant Saviour. No angels have we heard on high caroling his praises, no bright effulgence has paled the stars of night heralding the birth of the Infant of eternal years. Only the steady light of faith has dispelled the night of our hearts; and lo! we are here. Last Christmas is long ago, and perhaps the slow-footed year has brought an unwonted share of sorrow into our lives. We may have stood for many a day beside the bed of pain whereon tossed one we loved with all the strong love of our heart, and when life had flickered slowly to its term, we sped the parting soul and trusted it to Jesus' kind care. We may have had days and weeks and months of mental anxiety that none could share with us, for it was on us the others leaned, and we had to hide the gnawing care of our own sad heart. Perhaps the bright days have been few and the dark days many. It may be the shadow of the Cross was hard athwart our path even as it falls across the crib at Bethlehem.

But all that is hidden now as we companion with the silent adorers of the first Christmas night. Mary, our Mother, is there, and Holy Joseph, too; and yet, sluggards in virtue that we are, we may feel out of place near them. Mary's wondrous love and Joseph's unfailing devotion seem so far beyond the reach of my faint efforts. Somehow, it is best to take my place among the lowly shepherds, content just to be there, happy just to find comfort in the presence of my King and Maker, Baby as He is.

I shall join the wide-eyed hillside herdsmen, and say my simple prayers with them, a-wondering at that "which is come to pass, which the Lord hath showed to us." In childlike, broken speech with them, I shall tell my God that I, too, have come to welcome Him on this his birthday. With them I shall offer the gifts of the poor of earth. I shall thank Him for the past and its teeming graces, thank Him for the light and thank Him for the shadow, thank Him for the lessons learned beneath the Cross; and I shall ask the tiny hand to rest upon my head and bless the harvest-yield of days that are no more. Then with strong trust I shall lay the future at the manger's edge, the future laden with its hidden freight that only time will bring to light; and I shall ask again the infant hand to hallow the burden no man knows; ask Him to nerve my heart that it may grow more and more like unto his as the days slip by into eternity.

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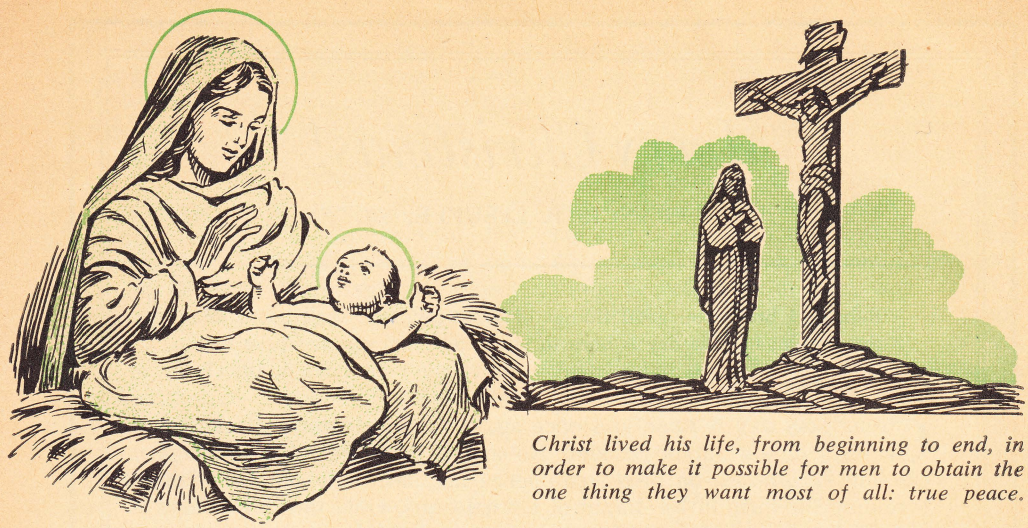


Christ lived his life, from beginning to end, in order to make it possible for men to obtain the one thing they want most of all: true peace.

CHRISTMAS STORY

By JAMES M. DEMSKE, S.J.

LIVING IN AN AGE which has grown up with radio and television, we are tempted when we hear of "the Christmas story" to think of Charles Dickens' famous "Carol," enacted for so many years as a regular Yuletide feature by the great Lionel Barrymore, and now being continued by other artists after his death. But it takes only a second's reflection and the words, "Oh, no! I mean the *real* Christmas story!" to bring us to the reality behind the symbolism of Dickens' tale. The *real* Christmas story is the amazing, stranger-than-fiction tale that began in heaven in the Eternal Councils of the Blessed Trinity and ended in the cold, makeshift animal shelter outside Bethlehem twenty centuries ago.

That's the real, *historical* Christmas story. But, as in all of God's manifestations in the world, there's more to it than at first meets the eye. Behind the external events there is always an inner meaning, a deeper significance which we can find if we stare and study hard enough. That's the case with the Christmas story, too: it's a story "with a moral," a story created and told by God to establish a real and very important point. And the point of the Christmas story is simply *peace*. God became a man, the Second Person of the Divine Trinity emptied Himself and took on the form of a slave, to establish the kingdom of his peace on earth.

"Peace"—a word constantly on everybody's lips, from Maine to Moscow—the one thing that everybody wants, and so few people really have—the paradoxical prize for which men will even wage war! Christ's peace is the one and only kind that makes sense. His is a triple peace, a precious three-faceted jewel with each face as magnificent as the others: man's peace with God, with himself and with his fellow men.

The main point of the Christmas story, the profoundest reason why Christ came to earth, was to bring man peace with God. But why wasn't man already at peace with God? Why was there enmity between God and man before the first Christmas? As every well-instructed parochial schoolchild knows, the answer goes all the way back to the beginning of history, to the time of Adam and Eve. The very first chapter of the first book of the Bible, Genesis, tells us that God originally created Adam and Eve in his own image. Next

to the angels, He made them his noblest creatures and told them to "take command of... all the living things that move on the earth." Man was to be the ruler of the earth and was to look forward to a glorious future in heaven. In the beginning, God and man were the best of friends.

But then this beautiful picture was suddenly shattered by disobedience, and ugliness and hate entered the world. Like so many of their foolish children after them, Adam and Eve turned against God and tried to get along without Him. In effect, they told Him to "leave them alone," to "mind his own business." They committed the world's first sin, the "original sin," and their children have been branded with it ever since. For they didn't just sin in their own name—they sinned in the name of the whole human race. They were our "first parents," the original mother and father of all mankind, and, with only one exception, they transmitted their sin to every one of their children like a hereditary disease, a terrible cancer of the soul. Instead of being a friend of God's, every member of the human family, Mary alone excluded, became his enemy.

How can we ever begin to estimate the damage done by the sin of Adam and Eve? Perhaps there are parallels in our own experience. Maybe we, too, have been foolish enough to tell someone who deserved all our love and respect—our mother or father, or wife or husband—to "go and mind your own business." And once the terrible words were spoken, how we wished we could call them back! How small we felt—and how helpless! What a crushing burden it was to work up the courage to admit our fault and try in some way to make amends!

The star of Bethlehem still shines over the world today to lead men of every nation along the way of Christ's peace.

When we are guilty of offending other human beings, at least we can apologize and try to put ourselves on an equal footing with them again. But when we offend God, who is infinitely far above us, who has given us everything we have, including the very mind and free will we have used to reject Him, how can we ever hope to repair the damage? Nothing we could ever do would make us equals with God. No man, no matter how good he may be, is ever perfect. How then can he hope to approach an infinitely perfect God, the God who made the entire universe out of absolutely nothing, and who holds it in his hand like a speck of dust?

Original Sin

That was exactly the problem that faced man for thousands of years after the original sin. And until it was solved, man remained an outcast wandering on the earth, a stranger to heaven and an enemy of God.

And then one cold, quiet night in Bethlehem the answer came—a mysterious answer, one that no man could ever have thought of, one which we shall always find impossible to understand fully. God gave *Himself* as the means of atonement. He Himself became a man, so that He could offer up his own life—a *human* life—in reparation. The Second Divine Person took to Himself a human nature, a human body and soul. He consented to be born and grow up in a human family, to eat and sleep, laugh and cry, work and play, and finally die like an ordinary human being. He offered to the Father—his and ours—this whole life and death as atonement for the original sin of Adam and Eve, so that man could once more be at peace with God. That life began at Bethlehem the first Christmas night—a night filled with the music of the heavenly choir praising the new-born Saviour and the principal gift He brought to mankind: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will."

The life of the Supreme Peacemaker provided not only the peace of reconciliation with God, but also the inner grace of a man with Himself. Christ laid down for us the basic lines of the all-important science of peaceful co-existence with oneself—what someone has called "the art of how to live with yourself and like it."

Despite the flood of modern writings on the subject—or maybe because of some of it—this inner peace remains for many something very vague and even unimportant. Only those who have ever been deprived of it can know its true value. Those who have never been heart-broken over the death of a close relative, who have never suffered through painful sickness, never been poor or felt the sting of prejudice or injustice, can't be expected to know what a marvelous gift it is. One who has never been torn within himself by worries and anxieties, never had to fight against his own selfishness or pride, never felt the raging fire of temptation, never been a victim to the slavery of sin and felt the awful, gnawing sense of guilt, is in no position to realize what a huge price a man would pay to be at peace with himself.

The Imitation of Christ

But those who have ever felt any of these things can appreciate what a precious treasure Christ gave us in his teachings and the example of his own life. For the experience of countless thousands throughout the world's sad history has shown that He—the God-Man of Bethlehem and Calvary—is the only real cure, the only real answer to such problems.

The answer to the problem of death is Christ—the Christ who gave us courage by dying Himself, who taught us that death is only a door through which we must pass, that it is really the beginning of *life*: "He who believes in Me, even though he dies, shall live; and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall not die for all eternity." The answer to poverty is Christ—the Christ who Himself was poor and worked hard all his life, who had not a pillow on which to lay his head, who wandered the roads of Palestine without a home for the whole three years of his Public Life.

The answer to suffering and injustice is Christ—the Christ who showed us by his own bloody passion how to make such trials valuable, how they can win countless graces for ourselves and for the world—the Christ who promised: "Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they who suffer persecution for the sake of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

The answer to our every-day anxieties is Christ—the Christ who taught us not to worry excessively about secondary things, but to keep our ideas always straight about what really counts: "Look at the birds of the air: they do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feeds them . . . See how the lilies of the field grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these . . .Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or, 'What are we to put on?' Your Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be given you besides."

Finally, the answer to our sinful habits and temptations is the Christ who died to conquer sin, who gave us such an inspiring example of strength and purity of soul, who showed us the amazing mercy of God by his tenderness to Mary Magdalen, by his treatment of Peter after the triple denial, and by his beautiful story of the prodigal son. It is the Christ who gave us the Sacraments to heal the consuming disease of sin: Confession, which restores our peace with God and puts our feelings of guilt in the proper perspective; and Holy Communion, the wonder-medicine in which Christ gives us his very self, his own Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity.

Christ also showed us how men can be at peace with each other. He taught that all men are brothers, all sons of the same Father, all created to share the same heaven. He strove to make men realize that they should all belong to one fold, should all live under one Divine Shepherd. He told the people of Palestine they are like

NEXT MONTH

CRUCIFIXION

by Brian McClure

branches of a vine, and that to have real life they must all draw their strength from the same one source. And to pass on this lesson to succeeding generations He founded a visible Church, in which all men were to be members and He Himself the Head. With all the strength and longing of his Sacred Heart He wanted the whole human race to live together in peace and harmony as one body—his Mystical Body—in which would reign the law of justice, charity and love.

To blue-print his plan in more detail, Christ showed us how to overcome obstacles to social peace on every level. In personal relations with others, we must struggle against petty aversions, restraining our unruly feelings with the firm reins of a truly supernatural outlook. He taught us that the Fifth Commandment doesn't stop with merely prohibiting murder—it forbids even wilful anger: "You have heard that it was said to the ancients: 'Thou shalt not kill' . . . But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment."

Good Will

He showed that we must rise to a love of God *through* a practical love of our fellow men—without this foundation it is futile to try to please God: "If thou art offering thy gift before the altar, and there remember that thy brother has anything against thee, leave thy gift before the altar and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and *then* come and offer thy gift." And He gave this love of neighbor a surprising new turn. With characteristic relentlessness He demanded that we love not merely our friends, but even our enemies, even those who persecute and insult us. This, of course, does not require that we approve the evil plans of our enemies —many of whom are today working with diabolical energy to rob us of our very religion. But it does demand that we try to further their supernatural welfare. We must desire and pray for their conversion and eternal salvation, since this is what our Father desires, He "who makes his sun to rise on the good and the evil, and sends rain on the just and the unjust."

In the broader field of social relations, Christ also gave us truly radical lessons. His preaching and miracles knew no "na-

Continued on page 58

Christmas Card Heaven

Big stores and little shops all over the land are displaying an incredible variety of Christmas cards, religious and secular, large and small, simple and ornate, beautiful and grotesque, sincere and humorous. There is something for everyone's taste and purpose. The real meaning of Christmas Day and Christmas greetings is only too often forgotten.

As part of the campaign to make Christmas in America a celebration of the birth of Christ instead of a mere holiday, *The Pulse,* Bulletin of the Green Bay Diocesan Union of Holy Name Men, published this phantasy:

Joe's Dream

Joe had a terrifying dream. One night he dreamed that he died. Off he went, relieved to leave the world behind him. He walked through a big gate and it clanged shut behind him. Then he got a shock. It wasn't at all what he had expected! Christ wasn't there, nor were there any angels or saints. There was nothing he had expected. He found himself in the midst of a regular menagerie of dogs, crazy-looking deer, and horses. There were big snow-banks all around, with church steeples sticking out.

Every place he looked he saw big fat fellows in red suits shouting with loud voices, "It's cold up here in the north pole." And tinsel—it was all over! Joe was seeing tinsel, chewing tinsel, swallowing tinsel. In the midst of all the confusion, a juke-box kept blaring out constantly, "You give my heart a lift on December 25th." Big, gaudy deer with long red noses were stumbling about all over, with ugly little elves pulling their tails. It was just a big, wild mess.

Joe ran for the door. What a disappointment! "This isn't heaven. Where's God? Where's the Christ Child? Where are the angels?" He climbed the wall; cold sweat broke over his face as he stood there on the parapet about to leap in order to escape the chaos. Then he awoke and, with a sigh of relief, realized that he had just been to a heaven the way heaven would be if it were made of the things on the Christmas cards he had always sent to his friends.

"Christian cards—and *only Christian Christmas cards*—for me from now on!" says Joe.

Mr. and Mrs. Cole were at a dinner party with friends on Christmas Eve. That was easier than staying home alone with their sorrow because of the unexplained death of their only son.

By JOSEPH A. BREIG

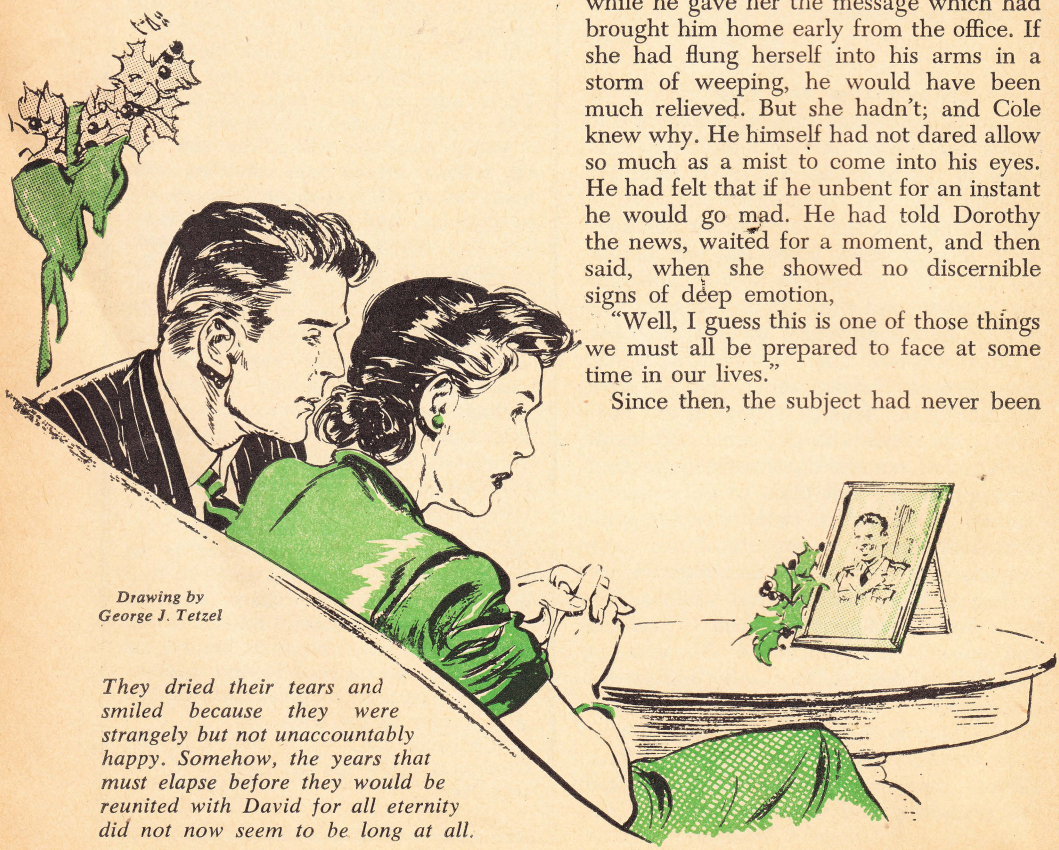
Stranger Christmas

MRS. COLE'S cheerfulness on this Christmas Eve was of the brittle kind that betrays a heart not merely broken, but crushed. Her husband, a far from obtuse person, watched her covertly and wondered whether he should propose that they both drop all pretense, excuse themselves from the Allertons' party, go home and frankly, at long last, break down. He knew that it was largely for his sake that Dorothy was carrrying on her brave masquerade. Behind every word of her animated conversation and her overbright smile was the bitter memory of their son, their only child, missing and presumed dead in the unexplained disappearance of an Air Force plane while flying a mission so top-secret in nature that they had been informed, with apologies, only that they would almost certainly never see their boy again. That, and nothing more.

Not for an instant, so far as Mr. Cole knew, had his wife lost the taut poise which he feared must end sooner or later in a smash-up. She had listened quietly while he gave her the message which had brought him home early from the office. If she had flung herself into his arms in a storm of weeping, he would have been much relieved. But she hadn't; and Cole knew why. He himself had not dared allow so much as a mist to come into his eyes. He had felt that if he unbent for an instant he would go mad. He had told Dorothy the news, waited for a moment, and then said, when she showed no discernible signs of deep emotion,

"Well, I guess this is one of those things we must all be prepared to face at some time in our lives."

Since then, the subject had never been



Drawing by George J. Tetzel

They dried their tears and smiled because they were strangely but not unaccountably happy. Somehow, the years that must elapse before they would be reunited with David for all eternity did not now seem to be long at all.

mentioned between them. They had gone about their usual affairs as if they had never had a son. Mr. Cole left home each morning, as usual, without waking his wife. Each evening at dinner they talked with elaborate lightness of the usual things. Mr. Cole occasionally questioned the housekeeper in a lowered voice, and received always the same answer:

"Mrs. Cole is bearing up beautifully, sir. I have not seen a single tear. She is the bravest woman I know. Too brave, if you ask me, sir."

Mr. Cole wasn't asking, because he knew. He knew that Dorothy and he were an odd pair. In most families, one or the other, husband or wife, provides the emotional release that keeps a marriage on the sane and solid ground of openly shared sorrow. But ever since the first moment of hearing the news, Mr. Cole had felt as if his heart had been encased in iron; and he knew that his wife was in the same terrible situation. He was like that because he was like that; and she was like that because she knew what he was like, and was afraid to open the slightest crack in his inflexible self-control. She was determined not to be the cause of his break-down . . .

Mr. Cole became aware only gradually of the presence of the stranger at their table. At what point in the festivities the man had taken a seat—apparently without a word to anybody—he had no idea. He hadn't been there at first, and now he was there, and Mr. Cole could not remember ever having seen him before. But when he did notice him, the stranger was looking straight into his eyes, and Mr. Cole felt almost a physical shock.

The stranger was extraordinary in many respects. He was not tall, but he looked taller than any other man in the room. He was in no way unusual in appearance, but he was the most unusual-looking person in all Mr. Cole's long experience. He was so slender as almost to seem slight, and yet Mr. Cole knew instantly that he was incredibly strong. But these were not the things that made Mr. Cole feel as if he had come into contact with an electrical current. What jolted him through and through was the serenity of the stranger's eyes and face; the serenity of his posture; the serenity of his whole being. Here, thought Mr. Cole, was a man who could bear all the world's sorrows without tears, and face all the world's follies and incongruities without laughter.

But certainly the stranger could smile. He was smiling now, and never had Mr. Cole seen anything remotely as beautiful. The smiling eyes looked into Mr. Cole's for a moment. Then they moved to Mrs. Cole, and back to her husband. An instant passed; then the stranger rose and strolled unhurriedly yet swiftly to a door that led to the Allertons' library.

As soon as he was able to do so graciously, Mr. Cole caught his wife's eye, inclined his head imperceptibly in the direction the stranger had taken, excused himself quietly, rose, and went to the library door. Presently Dorothy, who had long since learned to interpret accurately his slightest signal, joined him there.

"Yes, dear; what is it?" she asked.

He took her arm in his, drew her into the library, and said, "I don't really know."

The stranger was standing near one of the book-shelves, holding a book idly open in one hand. The room's tasteful lighting turned his face to a kind of gold. Dorothy Cole had taken several steps into the room before she noticed him. When she did, she stopped and stood still, and the carefully contrived smile which she had been wearing for so long left her face.

The stranger smiled and bowed.

"Please sit down," he said.

Mr. Cole placed Dorothy in a leather chair, and was about to take another for

BE BOLD

Rejoice! This is the birthday of
Our Lord and King Emmanuel.
Be joyful! Lift your hearts and sing
The Gloria and glad Noel.

Awake! This Infant is our God
From all eternity; be bold,
Adore omnipotence in Him,
Helpless and an hour old.

He is our Father's gift to us
Of love and hope and peace and light;
See how one star outshines the rest
To guide us to Him through the night.

Paul Stauder, S.J.

good—everyone's happiness—and wanted everyone to will his happiness, too? Because David loved in the way that—" here the stranger's eyes glowed more extraordinarily than ever—"in the way that Christ loved, Mary loved, the Family of Nazareth loved? The kind of love that gave us Christmas?"

Now Mr. Cole bowed his head and frankly drew his wife hard into the circle of his right arm. He put his left hand on her face and pressed her head against him. He said in a muffled voice,

"Yes, sir. I do not know who you are, but you are perfectly right. Our David loved as everyone should love. That is why he loved Christmas. You knew him very well. Very well, indeed."

"I *know* him very well," the stranger amended.

There was a long silence. Presently the stranger broke it with a light, almost offhand remark.

"David is happier this Christmas Eve than he has ever been before. Quite inexpressibly more happy. He gave all, and he is receiving all. He loved to the limit beyond which no man can love more greatly. This is David's Christmas of Christmases. And his Christmases will not cease."

The stranger paused, then spoke very slowly. "David would like this to be *your* happiest Christmas, too."

Mr. Cole looked up, shaking his head. "That is not possible, sir."

But his wife sat up suddenly and turned her face up to his.

"It *is* possible," she exclaimed. "Don't you see what this man is telling us? He is telling us to be like David. To want everybody's happiness. Because if we want everybody's happiness, then their happiness will make us happy. Don't we want David's happiness?"

Mr. Cole spoke gruffly, almost belligerently. "Of course we do. That's what has always made us happy."

"Then, dear," she said, "if David is happier than ever before, because he was able to give himself completely for others, why shouldn't this be the happiest Christmas of our whole lives?"

They searched each other's eyes for a moment. Then Dorothy Cole sighed. She lifted her face, and her husband bent and kissed her. They did not notice that the stranger was no longer there. They did not notice for a long time; and when they did, they supposed that he had simply strolled out to rejoin the Allertons' Christmas party. But when they followed, he was nowhere to be seen; and when they inquired about him, nobody seemed to know what they were talking about. They gave up the search and went home and put their arms around each other and wept like children. Then they dried their tears and smiled because they were strangely but not unaccountably happy. Somehow, the years that must elapse before they would be reunited with David did not now seem long at all.

"Happy Christmas," said Mrs. Cole.

There was a little pause, and then they both said together, "Why, it *is* happy, isn't it?"

Devotion to Mary

"Among the saints in heaven, the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, is venerated in a special way. Because of the mission she received from God, her life is most closely linked with the mysteries of Jesus Christ, and there is no one who has followed in the footsteps of the Incarnate Word more closely and with more merit than she: and no one has more grace and power over the most Sacred Heart of the Son of God through Him with the Heavenly Father. Holier than the Cherubim and Seraphim, she enjoys unquestionably greater glory than all the other saints, for she is 'full of grace'; she is the Mother of God, our Redeemer.

"Since she is, therefore, 'Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope,' let us all cry to her, 'mourning and weeping in this vale of tears,' and confidently place ourselves and all we have under her patronage. She became our Mother also when the Divine Redeemer offered the sacrifice of Himself; and hence by this title, also, we are her children. She teaches us all the virtues; she gives us her Son and with Him all the help we need, for God 'wished us to have everything through Mary.' "

—POPE PIUS XII

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—POPE PIUS XII

Two Triangles

The "eternal triangle" is a well-known phrase, fraught with emotional turbulence and social disaster. But God has given it a better meaning for all those of good will who listen to the voice of God in their hearts.

THE CAR MOVED quietly along the country road, its smooth purr the only sound in the December stillness; its three occupants silent and isolated in the world of their own secret thoughts like figures in a glass globe.

The tracery of the trees stood out unstirred against a sky luminous with the last of evening, its stars very young and shining softly like nursery night-lights. The fields were covered with downy mist like babies' blankets, and everything was lapped in quiescence; a quiescence of expectation, like the sleep of children on the eve of Christmas Day.

Twenty-four hours to Christmas, thought the man, his hand moving mechanically on the wheel. What a farce! Every year the same journey to in-laws; every year four days clogged with stodgy food and stodgier people; four days noisy with vapid chatter and yelping kids.

They called it a family reunion. The union never lasted more than two days; it started bright and brittle on Christmas Eve and began to crack on Christmas Day. By Boxing Day it was in flinders, with the women tearing the rags of charity off one another's backs; the men hardly speaking; the children peevish with overeating, and his mother-in-law rushing about squawking reproaches and tactless advice like an old hen.

What fools the whole lot of them were! But he was a bigger fool for joining them. He'd take care this was the last time, though; he would never go through all this again. His mind turned towards the woman at his side. She didn't need him, or want him, either. All she had ever wanted was the children.

No, he'd waste no more years tied by convention and respectability; he'd cut loose. Others did, and why shouldn't he? He'd often thought of it, but somehow he'd been held

Make a Star

By GEORGIA LOYAL

back. Not that he'd always played fair. He wondered if she knew—sometimes the way she said things—But he'd let it slide; he hated friction and, worse still, downright rows.

Funny, that's what he'd fallen for in her: her perfect serenity. When he first saw her, she looked like a gold and ivory Madonna, with an aura of heavenly restfulness. He'd loved her, needed her. He wanted a woman whose love for him was half maternal; a love he could rest in. And he had till the children came. Then he'd just faded out. They'd become her life. And her restfulness had become stolidity, and her placid beauty the doughiness of a woman heavy in body and mind.

Yes, he'd get right away and begin a new life; a new life with the girl who sat in the back of the car, if she would go with him. He wondered if she understood what was in his mind. He thought she did. Anyway, she liked him; when he talked to her she listened with her whole self. She, too, was quiet; but slim and alive. And there was something shining and untouched about her. Something that had kept his advances frailly tentative, that he'd been half afraid of breaking.

But that was just old-fashioned foolishness. Women were women nowadays, not china crinoline figurines. And he'd see she never regretted it. He knew, too, that he'd be happy with her. She had integrity; once she gave her love it would be for always. For always—he'd thought that of his own love twenty years ago, and look at him now! But men were different from women, and you just had to take from life what it had to give, and he was going to see that he got something better from it in the future than he had in the past. He touched the accelerator and the car leaped towards the stars that glimmered where the sky met the dark road ahead.

Strange, thought the woman, not to be looking forward to Christmas. But then it was so long since she'd really looked forward to anything—you got so disappointed. She felt old and tired and sort of dead inside. She supposed it was her own fault. She knew a more active life and wider interests would improve her mentally and physically, but she just hadn't enough energy or desire to change her way of life.

And, anyway, she'd always prided herself on being her age and wanting nothing but her home and her children. She'd lived for her children, and they loved her and were satisfied with her as she was. Not that it was quite the same now they were out in the world. She sighed. They were making a big effort to be at her mother's for Christmas, but she felt they wouldn't be there completely, not for her.

She wished they could have stayed little. When they were little they'd been absolutely hers. They'd never been her husband's. From the first breath of her first-born, he'd been jealous. He'd expected the same attention, the same interest as before. The trouble was he'd been a spoiled child and always would be. He'd never seemed to mature; and he looked so young still, with his narrow figure and dark hair that was always falling, little-boy fashion, into his eyes.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Let there be these on Christmas Eve:
The softly falling flake
Immaculate as Mary's soul,
A gentle snow, for her young sake;

And stillness deep and calm as faith
In steadfast Joseph's heart,
Who heard from her what men might doubt,
Yet trusted Mary from the start;

And for the Child, a small fir tree
Whose boughs are covered white,
A glistening thing to make Him smile
As other children might;

And for the world, a midnight star
In clearing skies, a token
Of Light that will not be withheld,
Of darkness broken.

Adelaide Love

She remembered how it had caught at her heart the first time she saw him; now it only irritated her. She wondered how long they were to drag on with this merely nominal union into which their marriage had drifted; it seemed much more of a mockery now the children had left home. He was on the verge of another affair—this time with that girl in the back. She was pretending not to see, as she'd always done—if he didn't want her she hoped she'd enough pride to withdraw in dignified silence and not degrade herself by questions and bringing out the disgusting truth.

So she'd agreed quite calmly to his suggestion that they drop the girl at her home town, which was on their way, to save her an inconvenient train journey. But she resented it all the same, and somehow more because she seemed such a spiritual sort of girl; the last person you'd expect to stoop to the lowest sort of thieving. But that was like life; you were never sure of anything except its not being what you'd hoped. She pressed her lips together tightly and kept back the tears of self-pity which blurred the stretch of road before her.

The girl smiled to herself in the dark. How lovely everything was! Strange how every sense was quickened, rarified by this new emotion that had wakened in her. Was she falling in love? And if this was the beginning, what would its fulfillment do? It made one frightened, somehow; even while it thrilled. She was being too sure, perhaps. After all, he had given her very little to go on; and yet she knew; knew, too, that he would want her to go the whole way with him.

STRANGE HOW different a thing was when one experienced it personally! She'd always felt distaste and often disgust when girls talked lightly of attracting married men, and divorce and the eternal triangle. Now it seemed different; at least, different for her. This thing she felt was so beautiful, it didn't seem possible it could be anything but good. And he wasn't happy and his wife didn't want him. Why should they go on tied together for the rest of their lives?

She thought of her mother; of her married sister, who'd said, in her last letter, that she could get her a job near her after Christmas. She'd hated leaving home; had wanted badly to get back permanently, until this.

Now it was different. She was on the way to becoming one of the sides in one of those triangles she'd heard so much about. She wasn't sure, even now, that she wanted to be; but she knew she was already touched by something stronger than herself that could sweep her away into a new world if she let it take hold of her. She shivered and caught her breath, half afraid, half eager, like a small child running to the top of an unfamiliar hill to see what lay beyond.

THE CAR MOVED through the outskirts of a big town, through busy streets, past lighted shops, into a large square. In the center was a towering Christmas tree, its tapering darkness starred with colored lamps, and under it was a life-size Crib. The figures were the conventional Holy Family, the shepherds, the ox and ass; but the whole was outlined with neon lighting, and over the whole was a star made by the same lighting forming two triangles, like the Hebrew star of David. The Crib was attracting a good deal of attention, and the occupants of the car, drawn by an interest outside themselves they would have thought impossible five minutes before, got out to look at it.

Odd how it kind of took hold of you, thought the man, even when you didn't really believe it happened. Made you wish you did. Perhaps, after all, it wasn't just a legend; but it was so long since he'd thought about it at all.

The figures were well modeled—nothing tawdry about them. But why was Joseph always painted in such drab colors? Made him look in the background, compared with the others; out of things, as if he'd been pushed aside now, like he'd been himself. But the artist couldn't have had that idea, because the face looked so grateful and—yes, *satisfied*, as well as humble and adoring. His attitude had a look of protection; there was something strong and virile about him. He looked a man; a man who'd not been afraid to take up his right place and shoulder things; who'd found himself in self-effacement.

His eyes shifted uneasily to the worshipping Mother; so rapt, so lost to every-

The True Meaning of CHRISTMAS

On Christmas day, Mary gave Christ to the world. Because she is God's mother, she is the greatest of all his creatures. In thinking of her high estate we forget sometimes that all of us have a like vocation. We have to give Christ to the world. We can do it in many ways.

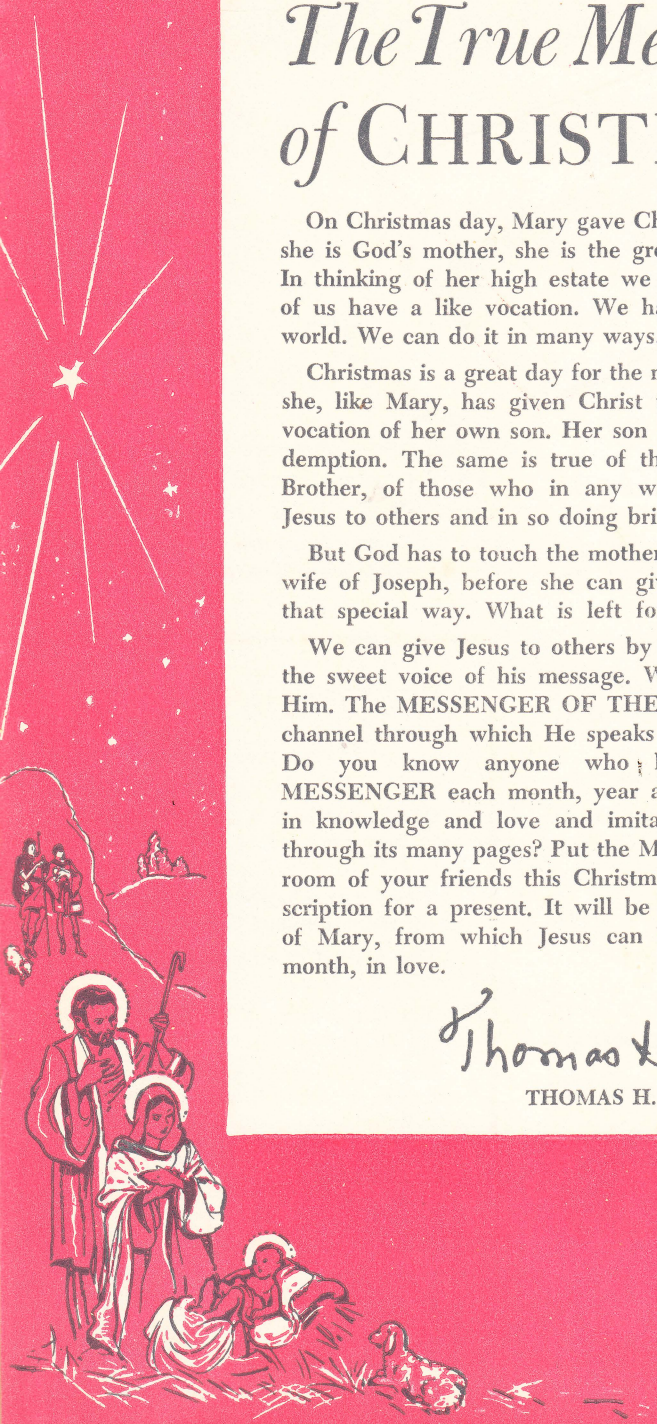
Christmas is a great day for the mother of a priest, because she, like Mary, has given Christ to the world through the vocation of her own son. Her son carries on the work of redemption. The same is true of the mother of a nun, of a Brother, of those who in any way carry the message of Jesus to others and in so doing bring to them Jesus Himself.

But God has to touch the mother of a priest, as He did the wife of Joseph, before she can give Christ to the world in that special way. What is left for the rest of us?

We can give Jesus to others by making available to them the sweet voice of his message. We can open their ears to Him. The MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART is the channel through which He speaks of the love in his Heart. Do you know anyone who has regularly read the MESSENGER each month, year after year, and not grown in knowledge and love and imitation of Him who speaks through its many pages? Put the MESSENGER in the living-room of your friends this Christmas by giving them a subscription for a present. It will be like a crib, like the arms of Mary, from which Jesus can reach out to them, each month, in love.

Thomas H. Moore S.J.

THOMAS H. MOORE, S.J., Editor



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thing but her Babe. She had a calm, serene beauty whose peace even her happiness didn't disturb. Like his wife's when they were young and secure in each other's love. After all, nothing could ever be as it was then; you couldn't get back the past by putting something new in its place.

There was something else about the figure, too: a virginal air that set her apart. A lovely thing, though you didn't see it so often nowadays; something durable and yet fragile, like an exquisite piece of glass or porcelain. Something that could outlast generations and yet be broken with one hand. If you broke a beautiful thing deliberately, you broke something in yourself as well. It was a mean thing to do. As mean as breaking the word you'd given to a woman twenty years ago . . .

The woman stood absorbed in the homely, heavenly scene. She'd always loved the Cribs in Catholic churches and admired the way Catholics put motherhood on a pedestal. How well she knew that first rapture of looking on one's first-born! There seemed to be nothing else in the world and no time or place.

AND YET, FROM where she stood, it almost looked as if the Blessed Virgin was looking across the Child at St. Joseph; as if she'd torn her eyes away for a moment to say: "He's yours as well—He's *ours.*" She'd never thought of it that way. Of course, Catholics made a lot of the family, too. The family: husband, wife and children.

Perhaps that was where she'd failed. She should have been more patient and understanding in the beginning, and more generous. And more open later when things had gone wrong. What she'd thought self-respect and heroic silence were really pride and a shirking of her duty to her husband as well as to herself; a dread of having failed him.

The thought of what might have been turned a knife in her heart; but it was a healing knife, a knife that renewed and quickened. Perhaps what might have been might still be, after all. Perhaps you could get back if you had the courage to go forward. It might even be easy if only the other person met you half-way.

Continued on page 57

Modern Machabees

The annals of the persecution of the Church in Red China, when they are written in full, will include many a story like the following one, reminiscent of the martyrdom of the seven brethren and their mother, as told in the seventh chapter of the Second Book of Machabees.

A mob of "progressive" (apostate) Catholics dragged a Chinese Jesuit priest through the streets of a village to bring him to judgment. A Roman Catholic Chinese, as he witnessed their savagery, remarked to his children that their mother would visit the priest in prison to bring him food and encouragement before he began his Way of the Cross.

One of the children remarked: "That will be the Fourth Station: the meeting with his Mother."

Another child said: "I, too, will help him, like Simon of Cyrene of the Fifth Station, who carried the Cross of Jesus."

A third volunteered: "I will wipe the sweat and blood from his brow, as Veronica did at the Sixth Station."

The youngest child remained silent. To tease him, one of the others taunted him: "You will trip him and make him fall. That will be the Seventh Station."

Deeply wounded, the little one retorted: "Why do you take the best things for yourself and make a Judas of me? I would not do such a thing. Never would I betray the father of my soul."

Soon the brave faith of these children was put to the test. On the day of the public trial, they pushed themselves through the crowd and stood at the side of the priest. When neither persuasion nor threats could move them, they, too, were put in prison.

The local pastor and the nuns of the parish convent visited the parents to console them and to promise they would use whatever influence they had to secure the release of the children. To their surprise and edification, the father begged them not to intercede.

"They only did their duty," he said impassively. "If they are in prison, it is with the permission and blessing of the good God. Please do nothing to deprive them of a share in the sacred passion of Christ."

The Holy Father's Mission Intention for December

JAPANESE STUDENTS

SCHOOLS TEACH SPELLING and rules of grammar in order to develop in the student the power of understanding the thoughts of others and of expressing his own thoughts correctly and clearly. Schools teach the nature and properties of minerals, vegetables and animals in order to give the student power over these things, so that he will use them for the benefit of mankind. Schools teach history and literature and languages in order to enable the student to understand human nature in its national and individual differences. Schools teach philosophy in order to communicate an understanding of human ideals and the purpose of the virtues.

The personality and character of the student are being formed as his mind absorbs more and more of the content of the various courses. He is different from what he would be without educa-

Continued on page 61

1. The Annunciation

Our Lady knelt in prayer,
Our Lady prayed;
And all the years reached back,
And prophets made
A path of timeless hope
Into her cell,
To stand adoring where
Their Christ would dwell.

Our Lady knelt in prayer,
Her quiet heart
So full, love-burdened,
It must burst apart
With joy. Her fiat said,
Her womb his own—
Our Lady kneels in prayer,
Not now alone.

2. The Visitation

The sun rose and the day began;
The day sounds grew as day sounds will,
And hummed while all the hours ran
Toward night. And on the quiet hill

Two women talked, two women spoke,
Of things that women talk and say:
The family news, the family joke—
The common thread of common day

Wove in and out of all they said.
But hidden there, in both their hearts,
And echoing inside each head,
A joy that grows, a joy that starts

A flood of love, of grace upstirred:
The Voice that calls, the long-called Word.

Songs OF JOY

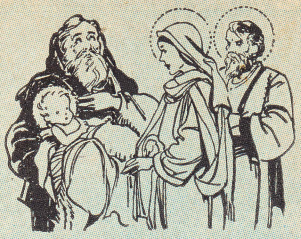
By THOMAS J. HORAN, Jr.

3. The Nativity

Tread softly here, night wind:
A Child sleeps and dreams;
A Child dreams and keeps
Heaven-secret schemes
Beneath his tight-closed eyes,
Within his tight-closed hands,
Under his soft, slow breath,
Wrapped in his swaddled bands.

Night wind, whisper here:
The Lady is lost in prayer—
She hears the songs of angels ring
Across the silent air.
She hears the voice of heaven,
And here, beneath her eyes,
She sees the face of God look up,
She touches paradise.

Night wind, be swift and silent,
And search the farthest sky,
Bring back a breath of Spring; come back
And hear a Baby cry.

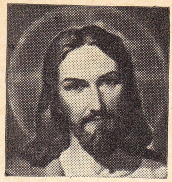


4. The Presentation

O day of joy! The Temple glistens bright
With sunlight, and a woman gives her Son
To light the world and wash away the night,
And bares her heart to pain. It has begun,
The journey through the years, a map of swords
To mark the way through tears; an old man's peace
Bought in the shadow of the Cross his words
Have fashioned. It begins, and will not cease
Till Blood falls on a hill. But still the day
Calls forth a song of joy: his will is here—
Be it done. They turn their homeward way,
Their footsteps quick with love and not with fear;
These years can be their own, this little while
Can hide the pierced heart with her gentle smile.

5. The Finding of Jesus

The nights grow darker,
And your feet more slow.
You lift your lonely lamp,
And in its glow
You search the dusty ways,
Each weary face;
The paths your footsteps know,
Each strange, new place.
The days throw empty light
And two still walk
Where three had walked before.
Now all your talk
Is prayer. You find Him.
But the Temple stone
Cries out: Not even now
Is He your own.



Sacred Heart League

ACTIVITIES

New Local Centers

CHURCHES: St. Agnes, Covington, Ky.; St. Anthony, Helper, Utah; Blessed Sacrament, Harriman, Tenn.; Catholic Chapel, Pinecastle Air Force Base, Fla.; St. Dismas Chapel, Federal Reformatory, Chillicothe, O.; Holy Rosary, Donelson, Tenn.; Immaculate Conception, Memphis, Tenn.; St. James, Las Vegas, Nev.; St. Joseph, Norris, Tenn.; St. Martin, Baltimore, Md.; St. Michael, Memphis, Tenn.; Nativity B.V.M., Los Angeles, Calif.; Our Lady of Perpetual Help, La Follette, Tenn.; St. Paul the Apostle, Whitehaven, Tenn.; Queen of Martyrs, Dayton, O.; Sacred Heart, Newcombe, Tenn.; St. William, Millington, Tenn.

HOSPITALS: Kankakee State Hospital, Kankakee, Ill.; St. Mary, Columbus, Nebr.

RELIGIOUS: Marianist Scholasticate, Moraga, Calif.

Promoters' Receptions

CHURCHES: St. Augustine, Memphis, Tenn., 50; St. Francis Xavier, Merrill, Wis., 15; Holy Trinity, Fingal, N.D., 4; St. Joseph, Crosby, Minn., 24; St. Joseph, San Jose, Calif., 7; Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, Greensboro, N.C., 10.
SCHOOL: St. Cecilia, New York, N.Y., 1.
NOVITIATE: Queen of the Rosary, Amityville, N.Y., 20.

Good Works Offered the Sacred Heart for Members' Intentions

Acts of Charity, 77,628; Beads, 93,993; Way of the Cross, 36,814; Holy Communions, 59,111; Spiritual Communions, 49,937; Examen of Conscience, 73,226; Hours of Labor, 189,495; Hours of Silence, 191,080; Pious Reading, 885,792; Masses Read, 6,489; Masses Heard, 64,479; Mortifications, 72,873; Works of Mercy, 31,027; Works of Zeal, 30,387; Prayers, 347,714; Kindly Conversation, 36,330; Suffering, Afflictions, 36,813; Self-conquest, 33,604; Visits to Blessed Sacrament, 85,201; Various Good Works, 61,440.

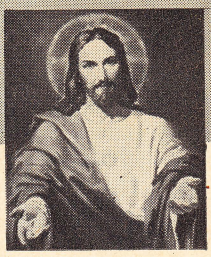
Bringing Holy Communion to the Sick

"One Friday evening during the early part of last February, I was preparing my radio script for the next morning's broadcast. Suddenly I felt a terrific pain in my left shoulder on down to my wrist. I called the doctor and went to see him. He said my blood pressure was extremely high and that I should take it easy.

"I went to the studio the next morning, but Sunday morning I was unable to go to Mass. By Sunday night, I felt miserable; and about two-thirty Monday morning, I awakened with the same dreadful pain. In addition, my heart was pounding so fast and so loud that I could actually hear it and the bed shook. I tried to get up but was afraid I would fall. I couldn't lie down for the noise and sensation in my head. I didn't want to disturb the doctor unnecessarily at that hour of the morning. I fought with myself for some time that it was just nerves. Finally I reached for the phone. I had the receiver in my hand when the thought struck me, 'Why not call on the Sacred Heart?' I took the Badge from under my pillow and placed it on my head. I prayed that I would be able to lie down and sleep. In just a few moments, the pain subsided and my heart slowed down. I slept soundly until seven o'clock.

"When the doctor came, he said it was complete physical exhaustion with some heart involvement. He ordered absolute quiet—no phone, no visitors. I was in bed for ten weeks but the Sacred Heart was especially good to me; the priest drove ten miles every morning to bring me Holy Communion. With such wonderful help, I am almost back to my old self again."

THANKSGIVING *to the* SACRED HEART



Sight Regained

MAYFIELD, KY.—"Several months ago my sister had a skin cancer removed with radium treatments. A little later she went for an eye examination, since she was having trouble with a blurring in the eye nearest to the treated place. Of course, she thought she just need glasses. The eye doctor said the vision was too far gone for glasses to help; another optometrist found the same thing, and sent her back to the doctor who had given her the radium treatments. He gave her many tests, and said it could not be the radium. My sister began wearing a relic of St. Pius X, and I promised publication in the MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART if it proved not to be cancer. She had a second examination three weeks ago, and the doctor said a certain percentage of the vision had returned and evidently the nerve was not dead. Many, many thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus!"

Walks Correctly

GUTHRIE, OKLA.—"Last year our son had the second operation for a muscle ailment in his legs and feet, a weakness he had had from birth. This difficulty caused him to walk on his toes, and had also affected his whole nervous system. From the first, we put a Badge of the Sacred Heart on him, and prayed to the Sacred Heart that his difficulty would be corrected. For several weeks after he was taken from the cast he had no use of his feet, and later, when he did try to walk, he did not walk correctly. Then the incisions on his heels broke open. However, we continued our prayers to the Sacred Heart, and our boy continued to wear the Badge. We knew the Sacred Heart would help him, even though everything seemed to be so discouraging for so long. I promised publication if our prayers were answered. Now, thanks to the Sacred Heart, our son walks as well as any other boy and he can beat most of them at running. In their races, he won the hundred-yard dash and the two-hundred-yard dash. His nerves have improved greatly and he is doing better in his school work. All thanks to the Sacred Heart and his Blessed Mother!"

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Successful Head Operation

LAKEWOOD, N.J.—"Public acknowledgment of a favor received from the Sacred Heart was promised if an operation on a very young baby's head was successful. Through the goodness of the Sacred Heart, the baby withstood the long, tedious and delicate operation, which lasted five and a half hours, and is making progress daily, even though it will take some time for complete recovery."

Serious Injuries

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.—"Two friends, while driving, lost control of the pick-up truck. They went off the road and fell to the bottom of the hill. The pick-up was completely demolished, and any chance for the lives of the passengers was very slim. They were unconscious and in critical condition for several days. One had internal injuries, and all hope for him was given up one night; the other had a brain injury, and there was fear of permanent injury to the brain if he lived. We prayed to the Sacred Heart and promised publication if they recovered. The day after our promise, one of them regained consciousness, and two days later, the other one. Their recovery surprised the doctors, especially since it was so sudden. It is also a complete recovery, for they are both back at their regular work. All our thanks to the Sacred Heart for a great favor!'

Meningeal Tumor

COLUMBIA, S.C.—"My nephew was born with a meningeal tumor, which had to be removed when he was only one day old. For months he had to lie on his stomach, with his head elevated. We were concerned over his head growing too fast, and about his left leg, which has not developed as it should. He is almost two now and wears a brace on his leg but cannot walk yet. Last week, when he was examined by the doctors, my sister was told that his head is normal, that he can be taught to walk with crutches, and that eventually he will be all right. The doctors say he is very lucky, as most children with this trouble are paralyzed from the waist down and have to have operations on the head. All our thanks to the Sacred Heart and his Blessed Mother! I promised publication if he would become a normal child, and it looks as if he will."

Safe Delivery

DURAND, WIS.—"Four years ago, when my daughter was expecting her first baby, the doctors told her she had RH negative blood and a toxic condition. They feared they would have to do a goiter operation and were not sure that they could save the baby. I begged the doctor not to operate; and prayed to the Sacred Heart and promised publication if she would come through safely with a healthy, normal child. Her baby was born healthy and strong, and she now has three children, all of whom are normal and well. Thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus!"

Motherhood

BALTIMORE, MD.—"A year ago, I was told that I would undoubtedly have a miscarriage because of a tumor, and that would mean no more hope of having a child. I prayed to the Sacred Heart and Our Lady, and promised publication if all turned out well. We now have a five-months' old baby girl named Mary, our first child after ten years of marriage. All thanks to the Sacred Heart!"

Baptism

MAYFIELD, KY.—"Non-Catholic friends learned that their little four-year-old daughter had leukemia and could live only a few weeks. I was distressed when I found out that she had not been baptized. I promised publication of a thanksgiving in the MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART and to make a personal sacrifice if my prayer for her Baptism was granted. The very next day I was given an opportunity to go to see her (she lived fifty miles away), and when I asked her parents if I could baptize her they gave their consent. She died about two weeks later. I shall be forever grateful to the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

Return to the Sacraments

ELIZABETH, N.J.—"I wish to acknowledge a wonderful favor I received through the Sacred Heart after forty-five years of prayer. My husband had not been to Mass or the Sacraments in that time. He became ill and, through the mercy of the Sacred Heart, he returned to the Church and receives Holy Communion often. I promised publication if my prayers were answered. All thanks to the Sacred Heart!"

QUESTIONS *of the Month*

REGULAR M.S.H. MONTHLY FEATURE

CONGREGATION OF JESUS CRUCIFIED

What are the origin and purpose of the Congregation of Jesus Crucified, and what are the membership requirements?

THE CONGREGATION OF Jesus Crucified was founded in Paris in 1930 and subsequently, by successive stages in 1933 and 1937, was granted recognition as a Religious Institute by the Holy See. It now has four convents or priories, standing in suitable properties, at Brou and Chelles, where the novitiate is, both places near Paris, and at Villers-en-Vexin (Eure) and Andecy (Marne). In 1950 Rome erected the Institute into a Religious Congregation in the fullest sense and placed it under the direct control of the Holy See.

The Congregation was founded for the reception of those who may be prevented either by ill-health in any degree or by physical disability, such as blindness, etc., from entering Religion elsewhere. Those who enjoy the blessing of good health are also accepted, provided they have the dispositions which are essential for a vocation to its form of life.

The life of the Sisters is a contemplative one and is centered round the Sacred Liturgy in the Sacrifice of the Mass and Divine Office. There is Exposition and Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament each First Friday, and the devotion of the Holy Hour every week.

There are no lay Sisters. Each nun takes her share in the necessary household tasks, in- or out-of-doors. If confined to her bed she will still perform some useful task, even if it be for only a few minutes during the day. It is the Superior's special concern that only so much is demanded of each as may be reasonably expected of her and that the strength of one will be made to compensate for the weakness of another by careful allotting of duties.

A wise provision of the Rule forbids the Sisters to discuss any ailment with one another. There is not the slightest resemblance, therefore, in their priories to sanitariums or hospitals, where the atmosphere at times can be so depressing; nor does the Religious choose the remedies to be used in her case. She leaves that entirely to her Superiors. The latter will, on their side, do everything in their power to bring about an improvement in health or, if possible, a complete cure. The best medical attention available is procured for that end.

The Congregation of Jesus Crucified is an enclosed one, so that its members do not undertake external works, or undertake them only so far as that is possible while remaining within the enclosure. In their convents varied employments are distributed according to each Sister's strength and natural aptitudes. Where necessary, the time for rest, diet and the amount of work to be allotted to each one is carefully determined under medical control. Their presence at Divine Office is regulated in the same way, the Sisters joining in that only according as their state of health allows.

The work of a more active apostolate is done especially by the regular oblates. The life inside the cloister is the same for the regular oblates as it is for the Sisters, but the apostolate of these oblates is one of more direct contact with the outside world. The most important duty of the regular oblate is to tend to the spiritual needs of those with whom she comes in contact. She relieves their physical needs in any way she can, but her mission is to bring them spiritual assistance. For the most part, the

regular oblates are in charge of the secular oblates, arranging visits and carrying on the necessary correspondence.

Each priory has a guest house where people in the world who are chronically ill or disabled, and perhaps discouraged and disheartened, may come to make Retreats and to receive encouragement and meaning for their suffering.

The following conditions are required in candidates for admission:

(1) They must be eager to conform with the will of God as manifested in their regard and be ready to see in illness or infirmity, if such is their lot, an invaluable means both for their own sanctification and for the conversion of sinners and unbelievers.

(2) They should have a happy and equable disposition, and be sincere and industrious.

(3) They must be under thirty years of age; and must provide a suitable dowry.

(4) They should obtain the consent of their own confessor and of the medical adviser of the Congregation.

Those are not admitted who are suffering from mental or nervous disease, or who may be predisposed to such by the medical history of their family. Candidates are not accepted who are suffering from a contagious malady which might be a source of danger to the Community.

When application has been made and the Reverend Prioress-General is satisfied that the above conditions are fulfilled, the candidate is admitted to make a Retreat at the Motherhouse of the Congregation. This Retreat is an essential preliminary. After that comes a six months' postulancy, followed by the noviceship, which lasts for two years. The novice then takes temporary vows and becomes a Junior Professed Sister. The temporary vows are renewed annually for three years, at the end of which period the final perpetual profession is made. To the usual three vows of Religion the Sisters add a promise of complete faithfulness to the divine will, especially in illness and infirmity.

Those who are interested in the Congregation of Jesus Crucified, or who wish to help its work, may obtain further information by writing, in English if desired, to: Madame la Prieure Generale, Prieuré S. Joseph, 1 rue de Paris, Brou-sur-Chantereine, (Seine et Marne), France.

Should one make the Sign of the Cross as the priest blesses the congregation with the Host at Benediction?

There is no regulation directing that such should be done; in many places it is customary to do so.

What is the name of the sacred vessel in which the Host is placed at Benediction and with which the priest makes the Sign of the Cross over the congregation?

It is called the monstrance and also the ostensorium. Both words signify a vessel or instrument for showing or displaying.

Should people kneel when listening to Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament over the radio?

Since the hearers are not in the actual presence of the Blessed Sacrament, it is not necessary to kneel during a broadcast of Benediction; still a respectful attitude should be maintained as long as the broadcast lasts.

When an infant enters heaven, does it become an angel?

Although we often refer to deceased baptized infants as "angels," the term cannot be strictly applied to them. Human nature and the angelic nature are essentially different and distinct, and one never becomes the other.

Is it wrong to read another person's mail?

It is wrong to do so without the permission of the sender or the receiver, or without any right to do so. Civil authorities may open and read private mail if it is necessary for the common good. Parents may read the letters of children who are still under parental authority. Superiors of Religious Institutes may read the mail of their subjects in so far as this right is granted to them by the Constitution of the Order. Private individuals may read the letters of another person in order to avert grave damage to the common welfare, a neighbor or himself. Whoever legitimately reads another's letters is obliged not to communicate their contents to those unauthorized to know them. If matters of grave importance are involved, it is a mortal sin to violate the natural secrecy of private mail.

What is the "Angelic Warfare of St. Thomas Aquinas"?

It is a confraternity, approved in 1654 by Pope Innocent X. Members honor St. Thomas Aquinas as their protector and defender against impure temptations. God granted special graces to St. Thomas after he courageously resisted a temptation deliberately arranged by men in order to corrupt him. Persons of either sex, married or single, can become members by applying or writing to any Dominican church and requesting information and admission. Pius XI strongly urged the propagation of the Confraternity among all youths, and especially those destined for the priesthood.

Does God will everything that happens, even wicked acts by which others are injured?

God does not positively will moral evil, or sin; but He permits it, because He wishes man to serve Him freely and therefore leaves him capable of disobeying his laws. Besides, in his infinite wisdom God knows how to draw good from the evil. Thus, for example, the unjust acts of the wicked may be the occasion of the exercise of virtue on the part of those whom they injure.

Must a sanctuary lamp always burn before the Blessed Sacrament? I have been told that as long as the tabernacle door is covered by a curtain it is not necessary to have a light before it to show that the Blessed Sacrament is there. Is this true?

The law of the Church, as expressed in Canon 1271, prescribes that at least one lamp burn continually, night and day, before the tabernacle in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. It further stipulates that the light of this lamp should be fed by olive oil or by beeswax; but where olive oil cannot be obtained it is left to the prudence of the Bishop to permit the use of other oils, which, if possible, should be vegetable oils. The presence of a curtain before the tabernacle door does not in any way lessen the obligation of keeping a sanctuary lamp burning.

Accidentally to let the sanctuary lamp go out, without carelessness or negligence, would not be a sin. A culpable and deliberate violation of this law for a short period of time would be a venial sin.

Must one who finds money try to discover the owner?

When one finds something which has been lost by another and takes charge of it, he is obliged to try to find the owner with an amount of effort proportionate to the value of the object.

In the case of a very considerable sum of money, an advertisement in the paper would be the proper thing, and, of course, the owner, if found, would have to pay for this and any reasonable expenses involved.

If the one from whom you purchase something makes a mistake and charges too little or gives you too much change, are you obliged to tell him about it?

Of course. Otherwise you are keeping something that belongs to another. The obligation is the same as if you found the amount of money involved in the mistake and knew who the owner was. The fact that the seller inadvertently "gave" you the difference between what you should have paid and what you did pay does not change the case, since he did not do so intentionally.

Please explain what is meant by the obligation of restitution.

Restitution means the returning of something which has been unjustly taken from another, or of its equivalent; also, the reparation of unjust damage done to the person or the reputation or the property of another.

Those who commit sins of injustice are bound in conscience to make restitution, as far as they are able, to those whom they have injured. If the damage done has been serious, this obligation is a grave one and unless the guilty person is willing to fulfill it, he cannot obtain forgiveness of his sin.

N.B.—Questions will not be answered by personal letters. Inquiries about personal sins or marriage cases should be made in person to a priest who can make all necessary inquiries about the details. Anonymous questions are not answered; names and addresses are not published. It is impossible to answer all the hundreds of questions received, and those of general interest are given the preference. Address letters to "Questions of the Month."

BOOKS *of the Month*

The Nun. By Margaret Trouncer. Sheed & Ward, New York, N.Y. 320 pp. $3.50.

The story of St. Margaret Mary is here told with dramatic vividness. It begins in the country, where the Alacoque family lived in idyllic peace and happiness. But it soon becomes a Cinderella story. After her easy-going father died, Margaret and her mother became the victims of parsimonious, tyrannical relatives who seemed to have a diabolic hatred of Margaret. That went on until she was eighteen, when her sick mother suggested marriage as an escape. Both mother and daughter seemed to forget the vow Margaret had made at the age of fourteen to become a nun. But Our Lord did not forget. He reminded her of it, and she yielded.

The drag of home was strong. She was very devoted to her mother, and her mother seemed pitifully dependent on her emotionally. But the call was a strong one, and God gave them both the strength to endure the separation.

The prospect of the convent seemed like heaven to Margaret. It became a heavenly heaven, but not an earthly heaven. She was still among human beings; and the human beings in that particular convent made life very difficult for Margaret. It was all in God's plan. He was training a saint who would teach the world what it means to make reparation.

The effect of the apparitions on her was to make her seem a difficult subject to her Superiors and an unpleasant mystery to her fellow Sisters. She sometimes remained entranced in the chapel while the others went to meals; and only a summons from the Superior could arouse her. When commanded to tell of her experiences during prayer, she reported the special commands of the Saviour, and suffered scorn and reproach as a result.

Margaret was helpless to act differently. She knew it was up to Our Lord to bring her Superiors to a different mind. In the meantime, she must obey them. That is the test of holiness. What she went through was partly for her sake, to purify her still more, and partly to give the world irrefutable evidence that the revelations were of God. She did what her Superiors told her to do, and she did what Our Lord told her to do, no matter what the cost. They were demanding; He was demanding. To try to satisfy them and Him was an agony and a crucifixion.

The world became convinced only after a long time. The first one to see that she was a chosen soul was Father Claude de la Colombière, the newly appointed rector of the Jesuit community at Paray-le-Monial. Although young in years, he was already far advanced in the spiritual way, and was an excellent director of souls. He saw immediately that Sister Margaret Mary was a chosen soul.

Before he took up his new post, Our Lord had told Margaret that He was sending her someone who would understand, support and assist her. It was blessed relief both to her and her Superior, but only for a short time. Her troubles were not over. They were even gravely increased when Blessed Claude departed for England to act as spiritual guide to the Duchess of York. The full fury of the devil was released against her through the bitterness of a few of the Sisters in the convent. This was the time of suffering beyond anything she had endured before. Margaret never gave a full account of what happened, but her biographer finds clues enough to reconstruct a scene like that of Jesus in the prison during the night before He died.

As older Sisters died, young Novices came to take their place. There came a time when they asked the new Superior to appoint her Mistress of Novices. Among these younger Sisters she found her first disciples. They lovingly composed an account of her life which is now one of the principal sources for biographers.

Although St. Margaret Mary was appointed to posts of honor and responsibil-

ity in the convent, her trials and humiliations never ceased. She was the saint of reparation. The sufferings she endured never made her bitter, resentful, hostile, but rather humble, patient, forgiving and loving in the most apostolic sense. The devotion to the Sacred Heart is the most apostolic of devotions, and the work of reparation is the building up of the Mystical Body of Christ. It is the saving power of Christ communicated to men by membership in the Church which Christ established to do his work on earth until the end of time. That is the message of the life and sufferings of St. Margaret Mary.

JAMES J. LYNCH, S.J.

Fatima, Hope of the World. By Joseph A. Pelletier, A.A. Washington Press, Worcester, Mass. 203 pp. Cloth: $3.00; paper: $1.50.

In recent years, many books have told the story of the apparitions of Our Blessed Mother to the three children of Fatima. This book is of special value because it continues the story up to the present day. It deals with the lives of the three little shepherds from 1917 on, and with those parts of the Fatima message which concern peace and war, the consecration and conversion of Russia, and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Another part of the Fatima message is still ignored by the world and is usually referred to as the Fatima secret, or the Secret of 1960, since it is to be made known in that year. This topic, which has so captured imaginations, is also discussed at considerable length. Certain other more recent developments like the episodes of the doves and the Pilgrim Virgin statues bring the story up to date.

The author visited Fatima in 1948 and in 1950. Both times he led pilgrimages, truly modern pilgrimages that flew the Atlantic in TWA constellation planes, and was granted the privilege of consulting the text of Sister Lucia's "Memoirs."

The author has also incorporated in his book excellent material gathered by priests and others who have questioned Sister Lucia at various times. He has utilized information obtained by the Rev. H. Jongen, S.M.M., who saw the Sister four times in 1946, by the Rev. Thomas McGlynn, O.P., who spent a week in her convent of Sardao near Oporto in 1947, by Canon C. Barthas, who interviewed her several times from 1946 on, and by April Oursler Armstrong and her husband Martin, who spoke with her very recently.

Other new facts worked into the story were acquired by the author himself in conversations with Francisco's and Jacinta's mother, with Lucia's sisters, with the civil administrator or "Tinsmith" who kidnapped the three children in August, 1917, with Canon José Galamba de Oliveira, former secretary of the Bishop of Leiria and author of two books on Fatima, and finally with the Bishop of Leiria.

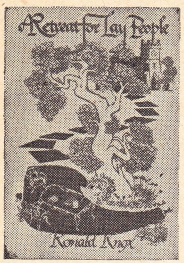
The Mind of Pope Pius XII. Edited by Robert C. Pollock. Crown Publishers, Inc., New York, N.Y. 234 pp. $3.50.

Pope Pius XII is a man of statesmanlike breadth of mind, and to this God's grace has added spiritual wisdom that is eminently practical. He says what the world needs most to hear, and he says it in the way most calculated to win the hearts, the obedience, or at least the friendship and respect, of those to whom he addresses himself. He stands unassailable not only because of the dignity of his position and his divinely-given teaching authority, but also because of the holiness of his life, the splendor of truth which shines in his words, and the attractiveness which is the fruit of meekness and humility joined to great strength of character and sublimity of purpose.

To know his mind is to know the mind of the Church, the mind of Christ, the will of God. He has "put on Christ" so completely that all things—science, philosophy, theology, diplomacy—are transformed in him into the Christian view of life.

Excerpts and significant sentences from his many pronouncements are here presented under chapter headings that designate the great social questions of today, such as "The Modern State," "Democracy," "The World of Labor," "International Community," "Technology," "Modern Education," and so on. The source of each quotation is given in a special section at the end.

A Retreat for Lay People. By Ronald Knox. Sheed and Ward, New York, N.Y. 258 pp. $3.00.



Monsignor Knox has written two Retreat books, "The Retreat for Priests," which he called a "strategic retreat," since it was built as a coherent whole; and the present Retreat, which he admits has the "flimsiest framework," since it makes no claim to organic unity, but is rather a compilation of meditations given over fifteen years.

The stimulus of Knox makes this a method that needs no apology. He is influenced in his thinking by St. Ignatius, and gives us new insights into the life of Our Blessed Lord. The manner of expression helps the effect. For instance, "Our Lord Jesus Christ went to his death almost in silence" is a sentence that sets the mind to recapitulating all the things Christ did not say.

Faith without works is "like a car laid up in the garage when there is a petrol shortage, because the owner can neither use it nor sell it." There is humor here and humanity and a gritty kind of spirituality that is the voice of a modern man in tune with God.

ALFRED BARRETT, S.J.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart, by Louis Verheylezoon, S.J. Newman Press, Westminster, Md. 280 pp. $3.75.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart does not consist merely in saying prayers in which Our Lord is addressed as the Sacred Heart, nor in novenas made in order to obtain favors, nor in attending First Friday services. Devotion to the Sacred Heart is a way of life. For the person who lives it fully, it is the motive behind everything he does from the beginning to the end of each day. Its meaning is summed up in the Morning Offering, which is a consecration of self to working with Christ for the salvation of all souls.

To understand devotion to St. Gerard Majella, it is simply necessary to know how holy was his life and how powerful is his intercession with God, particularly in favor of mothers. The devotion to the Sacred Heart cannot be adequately understood without drawing upon all the principal doctrines of the Faith and showing their relationship to each other in terms of the Mystical Body of Christ.

This book begins with an account of the apparitions of the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary. The visions and revelations which were granted to her in the seventeenth century in the Visitation Convent at Paray-le-Monial were the beginning of devotion to the Sacred Heart as it is practised throughout the whole Christian world today.

To interpret the meaning of Our Lord's words to St. Margaret Mary, it is necessary to explain three key words: the Sacred Heart, consecration and reparation. The author does so in the manner of a professor of theology, distinguishing and defining and correlating every element of these ideas.

In those parts of the book in which he speaks of the practices which Our Lord asks for, such as the Holy Hour and Communions of Reparation, he is practical as well as inspirational, and the pastor and preacher will find much that is useful.

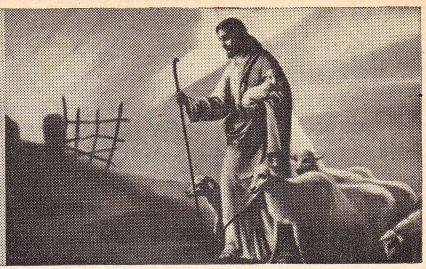
The principal contribution which this book makes to the literature on devotion to the Sacred Heart is the presentation of the official statements of the Church on all phases of the devotion. This, more than anything else, brings out clearly how fundamental this devotion has become to the every-day life of the Faithful. From the Popes themselves have come the clearest teachings and the most urgent exhortations to a complete dedication of all mankind to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

There is an appendix on the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and another on societies in honor of the Sacred Heart. In the latter section, and also throughout the book, he shows how the Apostleship of Prayer is a perfect form of devotion to the Sacred Heart.

The general reader must be willing to pass over some sections without attempting to appreciate the accuracy of all the fine distinctions, especially in the early chapters on the "Object of the Devotion." The book is scholarly in style and arrangement, but it is also a more effective appeal for personal devotion to the Sacred Heart than one sermon or a whole course of sermons could be.

JAMES J. LYNCH, S.J.

OUR BELOVED DEAD



We pray for our own dead and for all the Faithful Departed.

The Rev. John Chiramal, Chicago, Ill.
The Rev. Lawrence Hayes, Dubuque, Ia.
†The Rev. Daniel J. Hughes, Croton, N.Y.
†The Rev. George J. Strack, Orange, N.J.
The Rev. James Walsh, S.J., Denver, Colo.
The Rev. Russell White, Seattle, Wash.
Sr. M. Angelina, Montana.
Mother M. Josephine Arnould, R.S.C.J., Grand Coteau, La.
Sr. M. Baptista, Dubuque, Ia.
Sr. M. Esperance Cawkins, Troy, N.Y.
Sr. M. Ethbin Donovan, Notre Dame, Ind.
Sr. M. Ellen, San Francisco, Calif.
Sr. M. Anysia Jonilionis, Troy, N.Y.
Sr. Margaret Mary, Dubuque, Ia.
Sr. M. Natalia McGurk, Billings, Mont.
Sr. Maria McKenna, Notre Dame, Ind.
Sr. M. Amelia Quinn, Leavenworth, Kans.
Sr. M. Alvernia Rousseau, Tacoma, Wash.
Sr. M. of St. Ernestine, R.G.S., Kansas City, Mo.
Sr. M. St. Louis, Toronto, Canada.
Sr. M. Elfred Schropp, South Bend, Ind.
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CANADA.—Kathleen Haffey, James T. Langlois.

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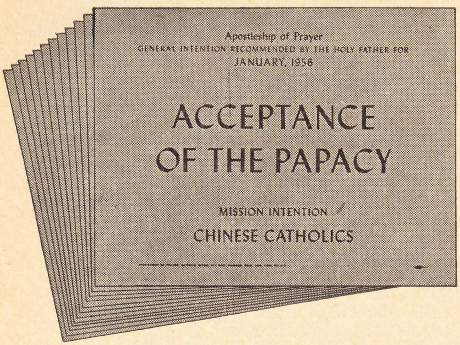
* Promoter, ‡ Diocesan Director, † Local Director.

LET US PRAY

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the Faithful, grant unto the souls of thy servants and handmaids the remission of all their sins: that through our devout supplications they may obtain the pardon they have always desired. Who livest and reignest world without end. Amen.

FOR THE Classroom



A WAY TO REMEMBER

The General and Mission Intentions

EACH MONTH

FOR THE FIRST TIME the National Office is making available a set of Monthly Intention Posters, intended especially for use in *classrooms*. These cards measure 8½" x 11", the colors vary monthly, and they contain our Holy Father's General and Mission Intentions. They are available in sets of twelve (January through December, 1956). The supply for this year is limited. Hence, it is important to send in your order to the National Office as soon as possible.

Each set of cards 50 cents.

NATIONAL OFFICE OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER
515 East Fordham Road, New York 58, N. Y.

A BETTER WORLD

Continued from page 11

ing from the ranks when the Church is engaged in a spiritual bombardment so decisive, even though his station be in the lines behind the fighting front.

Those who are now spreading the Pope's teaching on the Crusade, and await, hour by hour, the success of the work being done at Mandragone, near Rome, are looking forward this month to a dazzling display of spiritual sunlight piercing the dark clouds, to an unlimited shower of graces won by the prayers of the millions who belong to the Apostleship of Prayer, graces for those who are taking the leadership in this great work.

The effectiveness of our prayers will be measured by the signs of advance made now by the Army of God.

About the Author

Father Lombardi is an Italian Jesuit who electrified Italy ten years ago with his Crusade of Love. He started in May, 1945, at the end of the war in Europe, passing from province to province. He spoke in Turin, Genoa and Savona, Bologna, Ferrara, Ravenna, Milan and Brescia, Pavia, Piacenza, Cremona and Florence.

It was at Florence that the communists first attacked him openly. They cut the wires of his loud-speaker system, yelled insults at him, and attacked him in their papers. But the crowds continued to grow until, on one occasion, he addressed two hundred thousand in the Piazza del Plebiscito in Naples.

It was a crusade for the reclamation, the reformation of Italy. He is now the principal spokesman for the Holy Father's Crusade for the reclamation and reformation of the whole world.

In the Fall of this year, forty-five of Italy's bishops attended a ten-day course of lectures on religious sociology given by Father Lombardi and his staff. Up to now, about 3,500 priests and 122 bishops, archbishops and Cardinals have come to Villa Mondragone at Frascati, Italy, to study the new "revolution." "We are on the threshold of a new age," says Father Lombardi, "in which humanity will return to God."

ADVENT AND OUR LADY

Continued from page 13

matter where we are taking part in Holy Mass on this day, we are in spirit with our brethren in Rome, gathered about our Mother in her own special basilica.

As Advent progresses, the more and more marked becomes the position of Our Lady in the liturgy. However, in order to honor the mystery of Our Lady's expectation in a most special way, the Church has set aside two days in the third week of that season. One of them is Ember Wednesday, the other Ember Friday. On the first we celebrate the mystery of the Annunciation; on the second, that of her Visitation to St. Elizabeth—the day of the great *"Magnificat."*

The celebration of these two events right in the heart of Advent gives them a special tone and color which they do not receive when they are celebrated outside the Advent season. The Annunciation, of course, has its feast on the 25th of March; and the Visitation on the 2nd of July. This is particularly true of the Annunciation on Wednesday of the December Ember Week.

Like the First Sunday of Advent, the Mass on this day has, as its assigned "Station" (we are constantly reminded of our union with Rome!), the great Basilica of St. Mary Major. There are two Epistles in this Mass—both from the Old Testament. These two ancient prophecies are read to highlight their fulfillment in the Gospel of the Mass of the day. In both these readings and in the majority of the chant-selections in the Mass of Ember Wednesday, there is reference to our Blessed Mother.

The Mass begins, as usual, with the entrance-hymn, the Introit. So impressive has this particular chant selection been on the minds of our Catholic ancestors that the entire Mass of this day has been known for centuries as the *Rorate* Mass. On the lips of the Church, the verses taken from the Prophet Isaias (the Incarnation's special prophet) become clothed with meaning proper not only to the mystery being contemplated, but to the living mystery which is the whole season of Advent. "You heavens, send dew from above; you skies, pour down upon us the rain we long for, Him, the Just One" (Isaias xlv, 8).

The second of the two Scriptural readings in the instruction part of this day's Mass places before us the great prophecy of the Incarnation. The first reading from Isaias foretold the blessed results which would follow on the coming of the promised Messias. The second reading tells of the actual coming of that Messias. And most of all it speaks of his Mother. Achaz, the wicked King of Juda, refused—in mock piety—to accept Isaias's challenge that he seek a sign from the Lord. So, acting under divine inspiration, the prophet gave him that sign anyhow. And that sign has always been understood by those skilled in the interpretation of Scripture to be a direct prophecy of the Incarnation. "A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (Isaias vii, 14-15). Here is the prophecy of the virginal conception of Our Lady; here, on the lips of an ancient prophet of the Chosen People and now on the lips of the Church, are the words which foretold the mystery which we relive on Advent's Ember Wednesday.

The Gradual

Achaz refused to seek a sign. It was given to him despite that refusal. But, because he turned away from God, God's promise became for that wicked monarch a source of punishment. The Gradual which follows this reading develops a thought which the error of Achaz should suggest to us. It is this: if God turns away from those who refuse his help, He will, on the other hand, come to the aid of those who invoke Him with sincerity. So, making her own the words of Psalm 144, the Church sings in that Gradual: "The Lord draws near to every man that calls upon Him, will he but call upon Him with a true heart."

And, as the procession forms to go to the place assigned for the solemn announcement of the mystery of the Incarnation in the Gospel about to be read, the Church again borrows from Psalm 144 to invite us and all men to praise the holy name of God—the holy name of the Redeemer about to be revealed: "While these lips tell of the Lord's praise, let all that lives bless his holy name."

These words of the Processional Chant, which accompanies the Deacon and his ministers to the pulpit from which the Good News is chanted, lead us in spirit right to that realization of the divine promise as told in St. Luke's Gospel beginning with the phrase *"Missus Est,"* "The angel was sent . . ." Of all the pages of the Holy Gospels perhaps none is more beautiful than this one of Luke's, beautiful in its simple clarity and beautiful in its content. The holy Evangelist enables us to assist at the very scene of the Annunciation, and, because he most probably heard this story from Our Lady herself, gives us with rapid strokes of his inspired pen the terse and almost breathless dialogue which ensued between God's Mother-to-be and the angelic messenger.

In that moment when God saw that Our Lady was prepared to receive the Saviour of the world and to become his Mother, the Angel Gabriel presented himself to her, saluted her with great reverence and made known to her the work which heaven had reserved for her from all eternity. "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a Son . . ." God's will was known now. But Our Lady remained free to accept or to refuse. God willed that she should recognize the choice given her and that her acceptance should spring from freedom as well as from humility. "Be it done to me according to thy word." Her "Yes"—the *"Fiat"* for which all heaven waited and on which man's hopes depended—came from her lips and from her heart. "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

Coredemptrix

It is true, of course, that Our Lady could not have foreseen in exact detail every aspect of the role which lay before her. But it is even more true that with her "Be it done to me" she freely engaged herself to take her place in the work of our redemption. Every aspect of that work, every phase of it, she accepted in advance. And from that moment in history the New Eve took her place at the side of the New Adam, indissolubly united to the Saviour in his sufferings as well as in his glory.

The mystery made known in the words of the Holy Gospel, the actual offering of the Sacramental mystery can now begin. And, to accompany the Faithful as they come to the altar to offer themselves in the symbolism of their gifts, the words of Isaias are again used by the Church to exhort them to courage and confidence. "Take courage and have no fear; see where your Lord is bringing redress for your wrongs, God Himself coming to deliver you!"

In many places today there is a beautiful custom which has been revived for this *Rorate* Mass. At the Offertory the children of a parish—and adults, too—bring to the altar-rail their Christmas gift-boxes for the poor. There they remain until the end of the Annunciation Mass, and then, blessed by this contact with the Sacramental mystery, they are taken from the church and distributed to the homes of those who are in need. What a wonderful way to show our gratitude for God's gift of Himself in the Incarnation—by giving of ourselves and our goods to those fellow members whose Christmas happiness is made greater by our loving charity!

With the Communion antiphon, the Mass concludes on a note of reassurance. As the people of God come to eat of the altar's Eucharistic Gift so that their union with the mystery may be perfected, the words of Isaias's promise are sung by the Church: "A Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and his name shall be called Emmanuel—God with us."

In the Middle Ages there was perhaps no more popular week-day Mass than this one of the Advent Ember Wednesday. It was known—and is still known in many countries of Europe—as the "Golden Mass." It was celebrated—and is still so celebrated, even here in our own country since the Liturgical Revival's coming amongst us—as a solemn feast, in white vestments, with flowers and lights and music of festal tone. Some centuries ago it was also the custom to have a pageant depicting the Annunciation scene. And

COMING SOON

Providence in Puerto Rico

by June Verbillion

this pageant took place right during the course of the Mass itself. It was also the custom then that the Father Abbots of monasteries had to preach a special festive sermon on the text *"Missus Est"* on this day. To that custom we owe the existence of so many of the most beautiful sermons of the eloquent St. Bernard.

On Friday of that same Ember Week, the *Magnificat* breathes spirit into that day's liturgy, for it is filled with the joy of Our Lady's song of praise—"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour; for He who is all-powerful hath done great things to me—and holy is his name!" And so, as Advent draws to a close and Christmas comes nearer, the Church, having allowed us to live with Our Lady in Advent, enables us to enter into the sentiments of her heart in these two great mysteries.

Mother of the Redeemer, she became also, in God's plan, Mother of the redeemed from the moment of her assent—"Be it done to me according to thy word." From that instant on, all of us have lain spiritually in the arms of Mary. That is why during Advent especially, when we are trying to enter into the spirit of expectation of the Redeemer, the Church in her liturgy pays such homage to the Redeemer's Mother.

And that is also the great reason why, during this season, the Church would have us place ourselves whole-heartedly under her patronage. For living Advent with Mary and in the spirit of Mary, we can and will as children of the "Beloved Mother of the Redeemer" come to the Feast of Christmas—his feast and hers, too—with hearts open to the fullness of its divine graces.

TWO TRIANGLES MAKE A STAR

Continued from page 41

How lovely it was—so lovely it hurt. The girl found her eyes suddenly full of tears, so that the figures were all blurred. She'd always been touched by the Crib in the chapel of her old convent school, but she'd never felt like this.

Of course, she'd changed since then. But why should this new thing in her life, which had made everything else look more beautiful, seem to have almost the opposite effect here? The Crib did look more beautiful than any she'd seen, but its beauty was like pain. And the lovely thing she cherished in secret didn't seem so bright now; it suddenly seemed more like a Christmas-tree bauble held too long in hot hands.

She made an effort to concentrate on the Crib's arrangement. She was standing right in front and the lines of the principal figures formed a large triangle. A pattern; if you took away one of the figures, one of the sides, you spoiled the pattern. The pattern of the family: man, woman and child.

She looked up at the star which blazed above the scene. That was made of two triangles. The family was, after all, the real eternal triangle: as eternal as God. If she could lift the wrong one she'd been shaping vaguely in her mind, and cross it out with the right one, she'd make a star. A star had points that could prick; bright light could hurt; but there would be something bright and shining hung on a dark tree for the Christ Child to smile at.

The girl got out at her home town, saying she preferred to walk the short distance she had yet to go. She said good-by, making it plain she wouldn't be seeing them again. As they watched her go there was something lonely and yet valiant about her, and the woman felt the tears running down her face. The man turned his head and saw her emotion, which told him everything. His eyes fell and he brushed his hair back from them as he let in the clutch and the car moved forward. The road broadened out, white and straight in the starlight as they left the town behind, and they both knew it was the beginning of a new road for them.

The girl went on without looking back. She felt as if something sharp and icy had taken all her breath, and yet left a sense of elation. Up in the sky right ahead was one star brighter and larger than all the rest. The girl smiled—it was as if she'd just put it there.

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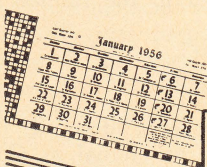

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CHRISTMAS STORY

Continued from page 33

tionalism," his mercy no "class consciousness." Members of all strata of Palestinian society were his friends—the poor, the outcast, lepers, laborers, tax-collectors, army officers, the rich, the educated, even Scribes and Pharisees. A rugged fisherman was to become his first Vicar on earth, a publican was to be one of the Evangelists who would bequeath to posterity a written record of his life.

He performed miraculous cures at the request of a Chanaanean woman and a captain in the unpopular Roman army of occupation. He spoke with friendliness and respect to a woman of the despised Samaritan clan and spent several days teaching the message of salvation to her townsfolk. In one of his most moving and memorable parables He went so far as to make a Samaritan the hero, a figure known to the world ever since as "the *Good* Samaritan." He showed with compelling clarity that his Gospel was meant to unite all classes of mankind, to break through all barriers, social, racial and national. This keynote of universality received its crowning confirmation in the final commission given to the Apostles:

"Going, therefore, teach ye all nations"; "You are to be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea, in Samaria and even to the ends of the earth."

Such is the pattern of Christ's peace for the world. But it must be a peace won through struggle, not a lazy peace—a peace obtained by a continual war against injustice, not the false peace of the man who heedlessly lets the world run its course—a peace acquired by constant vigilance against the worldly spirit, the flesh and the devil, not the blind peace of the weakling whose ultimate answer to all moral problems is, "Why worry about it? Everybody else does it!" It must be a peace of dignity, not the deathly quiet of a concentration camp, where men are treated as beasts and order is enforced by the threat of a gun or whip. In short, it must be the peace of Christ's kingdom,

not Satan's; the peace of truth and love, of sacrifice and mutual understanding.

This is the triple peace Christ brought to the world twenty centuries ago, and which He wants to bring again this Christmas. But his success now, in 1955, depends on the efforts of men, the co-operation of the members of his Church. The Babe of Bethlehem looks questioningly out of his crib at the troubled world of the twentieth century and asks his faithful followers: "Will you accept Me wholeheartedly, and agree to do everything necessary to be at peace with your God? Will you take an honest look at your own personal problems, and do all that is necessary to be at peace with yourself? And will you work hard—as hard as I did—to bring my peace to the men around you?"

That's where *we* come into the picture—*that* part of the Christmas story is up to us.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued from page 2

ing the Mary of this painting, created by the hand of man, how much more does the soul long to view the Mary created by the hand of God! EDWARD DOYLE

Dorchester, Mass.

The May cover was entitled: "Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth." The artist was William E. Luberoff.—Ed.

"CHRISTIAN VIRGINITY"

Dear Reverend Father:

I was very much impressed by Father Moore's article on Christian Virginity in the May issue. It is what we need hammered home, yes, even to Catholics. And I would like to thank him with all my heart especially for these lines:

"There are women living in the world consecrated to virginity by the sacrifice of duty and Christian love. Theirs is a Christian virginity, along with that of the nun who dedicates herself by vow to the Religious life so that thousands may be born of her into the grace of God. Their emptiness is being filled spiritually; they are real mothers."

This, too, is unknown by the majority, and it is grand to know that at least one priest counts such women as ranking with "all holy women in Religion."

MARY SHAKESPEARE

Bournemouth, England

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AT ALL BOOKSTORES

IRISH CHRISTMAS CARD

Continued from page 17

of the fireplace, where he hadn't even thought to look, was a guttered wax candle and beside it a lopsided box of matches.

In a few moments the candle was lit. Carrying it to the near window, he placed it on the narrow sill, then peered once more toward the bridge, but he saw no one. Yet, having lit the candle, he felt better within himself.

"No matter if nobody comes," he thought; "I know I've done what's right."

And that was when he heard a light tapping at the door.

As he flung it wide, there on the road stood the same couple he had seen in front of his own darkened house: the man in a long gray coat and no hat at all and a beard covering the whole lower part of his face, and the woman in a flowing cloak that glinted in the starlight, and a blue scarf over her head.

An indescribable radiance illumined her face as she said, "We have lost our way."

And the man added, "We saw your candle gleam whilst we crossed the bridge, and that is why we stopped here. Can you tell us which way is east?"

With head uncovered, and his body strangely quivering, Maury stepped just outside the door.

"At this blessed season," he said, "the sun would be settin' back there where I just saw it. So look ye yonder where I'm pointin'. The big star, the brightest in the heavens, see it? I'm thinkin' if ye walk straight towards it ye'll be walkin' straight towards the east."

And so great was his eagerness to help that he himself walked with the two of them down the road as far as the bridge. There he halted while they continued on toward the star, and because there was a sudden and strangely overpowering weariness upon him, he never once thought to ask himself who they were.

He stood watching until he was sure they were beyond the mountains, and then turning, he made his way slowly back along the road toward the cottage . . . only to find there was no cottage at all, only a brown, rutted road leading endlessly into vague distance. Then abruptly, because of the weariness upon him, he sank to the ground, and the stars vanished, and the road itself vanished, and all was darkness and silence and cold . . .

He awoke, stiff and shivering, surprised to find himself on the bench beside which he had prayed; and on his shoulders and all about him there was snow, and wherever he looked he saw Christmas lights, blue and green and red and gold.

Pushing himself to his feet, he peered at the snow on the beach in front of him, but it showed no footprints at all, and he thought, "'Tis a queer thing, I must have slept an' dreamt it!"

Then he remembered the thatched cottage and the candle he had placed at the window and the couple who had come to ask which way was east; and remembering that, he also remembered a custom almost as old as Christian Ireland herself: how a candle at the window on Christmas Eve is a sign both of welcome and of guidance, and how in the West Country, as he had often heard Rita say, if ever Mary and Joseph became lost on their way to Bethlehem, they had only to stop and ask directions at a house where a candle was burning.

STRIDING WITH buoyant steps toward home, the weariness and the loneliness entirely gone from him, Maury paused only long enough to buy a small tree at the corner market; and when he had set it up in the living-room, he said to himself, "Now I have just three things to do ere I go to bed!"

The first he did at once. Lighting a candle, he put it on the window-sill. Then he went down cellar and brought up the old box of ornaments for the trimming of the tree. Carefully he placed them on the branches and then sprinkled the tree with shining tinsel.

Now there was just one more thing to do. He glanced at the clock, and as he did so he noticed a colored card lying beside it on the mantel. There were other Christmas cards in the box of ornaments, and this one might have been among them, but he couldn't remember having put it on the mantel. So he picked it up wonderingly—and then caught his breath. For there before his very eyes—and this would be the fourth time—was the little thatched cottage beside the quiet stream,

and the road and the meadow, and the rounded stone bridge, and the distant mountains! Aye, there they were in full color on the card, and below them, in quaint type, the words: "Blessings On Your House And All That Are In It." And below the quaint type Rita's unmistakable handwriting: "It's exactly like the one I was born in!" And below that, "Merry Christmas to Maury from Rita!"

His throat was tight, and the card trembled as he brought it closer to his eyes. An old card it was, one she must have picked up special for him somewhere. "Made in the Irish Republic"—even with the blurring of his vision he could read the small print in one corner. Then he thought, "Merry Christmas to Maury from Rita!" And it was as if he could hear the rich West Country voice of her saying it.

Now for the last thing he had to do. After taking proper precautions with the candle, he put on his hat and coat once more and went outside where snow was still falling; and as he set off up the hill that he and Rita had climbed together so many times, it was easy to imagine she was again beside him, and he was wonderfully happy, as any man is bound to be who has lit a candle and walked with God on Christmas Eve.

JAPANESE STUDENTS

Continued from page 42

tion. He is different from what he would be under a different system of education. A student body, as a whole, is formed into the likeness of the teaching body, just as surely as an infant is physically like his parents. Japanese students will think like their teachers in Japanese schools and universities. And Japanese university students, more than any others, will determine the future of Japan. They are the business men, the scientists, the teachers, the politicians of the future.

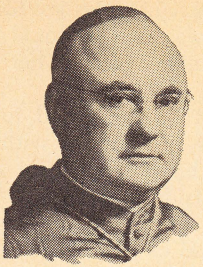
Like the United States, Japan is a university-minded nation. It is not a sprawling mass of impoverished peasants, like China; it is not a collection of different peoples and tribes, like Africa; it is not a vast land mass with a few civilized centers, like Australia. It is a compact people of advanced mentality, great shrewdness and ambition. Japan has long studied Western civilization and has adapted Western culture to its own needs. It has 226 universities and 700 colleges; and these are not enough to accommodate all who wish to enroll. In 1953, only one quarter of those who applied were allowed to register.

Japan's 50,000 college and university professors have been influenced by European and American thought on education, science and philosophy, and so have opened the way to the same kind of liberalistic and amoral tendencies which have corrupted Western youth. This intellectual atmosphere has its strong repercussions in the youth of pre-college age, and juvenile delinquency will tend to become as grave a problem for the authorities in Japan as it has already become in the United States.

The Catholic universities do what they can to combat the dehumanizing influence of a secularistic philosophy of education. There are five Catholic universities in Japan, with an enrollment of 5,000 students. While they cannot reform Japanese education, they can do much to create a strong and devoted Catholic elite in university circles. Last December, *Tosei*, a Catholic news service, published a congratulatory salute to the Religious of the Sacred Heart at Seishin University in Tokyo, on the occasion of the Baptism of 56 students or parents of students during the preceding year; and to the Jesuit Fathers at Sophia University, who baptized 24 students at Christmas time.

The Catholic universities and professors of Japan cannot accomplish more outside of their own institutions than the Catholic universities of the United States, but they can try just as hard, relying on the prayers of the whole Catholic world. It is our part to pray that God will grant them graces of encouragement and inspiration, and that their students will become the nucleus of an apostolic elite among the laity in the struggle to prepare a great victory for the Kingdom of Christ in Japan.

JAMES J. LYNCH, S.J.



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YOURS FOR THE ASKING

Continued from page 18

Maybe you know someone who is just as big a hero as Red. Some housewife that acts as if every day was Christmas—even though her wedding present turned out to be a husband that only runs on 90 proof. Or the cheerful fellow that is always so busy helping people that he never seems to realize what a miserable time he should be having. Or maybe—but never mind them. Let's get back to you.

Like these people, you can be happy no matter where you are. Why? Because it isn't the place that makes you happy. It's how you react that counts. It's taking a firm grip on your surroundings—those persons, places and things about you—and evaluating yourself in this light that can make you happy. If you don't, you'll end up as frustrated as a pole vaulter in a submarine.

Now that you're pinned against the wall by my irrefutable logic, what are you going to do? No—don't jump out the window. You'll only make more work for Graves Registration.

Here's what. First, relax your agitated bones on your beauty-rest G.I. mattress. Take a big drag on your tax-exempt cigarette, and—think! Find it annoying? Well, hang on; it pays off.

Think, first of all, of what you've got—not of what you haven't got. Right away you'll see that you're way ahead of a lot of people in this world. (Need I mention the millions behind the Iron Curtain?)

Now, point number two. If you think well, you'll also see that you don't have a lot of things. No—not the latest fish-tailed chariot, nor the snappy uniform, or Cleansey toothpaste, or This-Side-of-Heaven soap! These are a dime a dozen. But charity, gentleness, courage, chastity, prudence—these are rare. And these are what you need to be happy.

O.K. Who's got 'em? God. Does He sell 'em? Nope. He gives them away—free. Free? Yep, free for the asking. If you don't believe me, just read the Twelve Promises of the Sacred Heart. He doesn't lie, and He's offering the treasures of his Heart free for the asking.

O.K.? That doesn't mean that you need to quit wishing for a new C.O. or for a change of scenery. But it does mean that you must not put your happiness in these things. For they change as often as the wind, and if you rely on them to make you happy, you can resign yourself to being as miserable as a one-eyed reporter at a three-ring circus.

But if you put your stock in the Sacred Heart and aspire after "the nobler things," as the Gospel calls them, then all these other things will fall into the right slot—not as tyrants dictating your happiness, but as means to enrich yourself with goods that never change. Those are the goods of the Sacred Heart—and they're yours for the asking!

RETURN OF THE WISE MAN

Continued from page 21

have recognized her right away; and known she would be there.

She stood up and smiled at him, her shoulders drooping with the heavy pails of milk.

"Why, Beth," he said. "It's only you."

If she hadn't been so tired, that wouldn't have brought tears to her eyes—she was used to it. But she smiled again, and agreed cheerfully.

"Yes, it's only me. Who did you think it was?"

Clumsily, he took the heavy buckets and set them on the barn floor; took her hands and traced the red handle-welts across her palms. He was afraid to look at her.

"I thought it was the Blessed Virgin," he said.

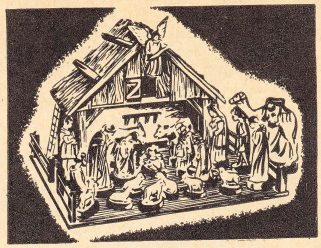
The tears she had been holding back fell on their hands, locked tightly together. She wasn't laughing.

"How could you have thought that?" she whispered. "I was only milking the cows for you."

"It was because you were so beautiful," he said. "Because you *are*—so beautiful."

When she lifted her eyes, he saw that the little-girl adoration was gone. But in its place was a radiance which reflected the light in his own, a radiance which seemed to fill the whole barn and stream out into the Christmas morning sky.

FOR CHRISTMAS GIFTING



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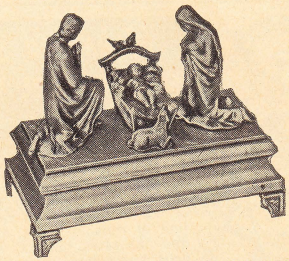

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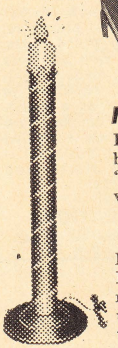

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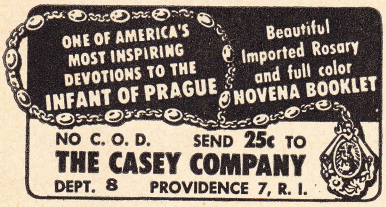

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ECCE HOMO

Continued from page 25

abject of men, a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity: and his look was as it were hidden and despised, whereupon we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows: and we have thought Him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by his bruises we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; every one hath turned aside into his own way: and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Behold Mankind!

Thinking of his passion as a Sacrifice, knowing it to be the fusing heat by which God and man were to come together in Himself, giving Himself to the Father now, in the likeness of men, with all that sin had done to ruin the touch of the Creator in this image of Himself, Jesus would note the words of Pilate well, and for Him they would have the deeper meaning. *Ecce Homo! Behold Mankind!*

Looking at Jesus, scourged and crowned with thorns, the world was looking at itself—through the eyes of God.

The sight of Jesus failed to soften the hate of the Jewish leaders.

"When, therefore, the chief priests and the attendants saw Him, they cried out, saying 'Crucify Him! Crucify Him!' Pilate said to them, 'Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him.'"

By this time, Pilate was thoroughly angry, and the biting sarcasm of his words was not lost on the Jews. But they were not afraid of him. They appealed now to the respect which Rome had for the laws and customs of their race.

"We have a Law, and according to that Law He must die, because He has made Himself Son of God."

St. John tells us that these words frightened Pilate "the more." Control of the trial was indeed getting out of his hands. It would not do for Rome to hear that he flouted the Jewish law demanding death for blasphemers. Nor was he able

to shake off the mysterious majesty of this Prisoner. His wife's dream flicked the edges of his mind. The faith of his ancestors in the gods of Olympus was a smoldering ash, warm enough to keep alive in him a superstitious fear of the invisible world about him. Pilate would fain keep his hands off this man from Nazareth who "made Himself the Son of God."

He took Our Lord back into the praetorium and asked Him, "Where art Thou from?" The silence of Jesus disturbed Pilate to anger. "Dost Thou not speak to me? Dost Thou not know that I have power to crucify Thee, and that I have power to release Thee?"

The terrifying answer of Christ to this question gave more than a hint as to where He was from and as to what the final outcome of all this would be. The dark hand of evil had no power over Christ, save what God gave to it, as to an instrument in the sacrifice of redemption. To the chief priests and captains of the Temple he had said the night before: "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." The words of the distraught Pilate bring him together in guilt with these others, before the mind of Christ, and He now judges them in the measure of their respective responsibilities: the malice of Israel, the weakness of Rome.

"Thou wouldst have no power at all over Me were it not given thee from above. Therefore, he who betrayed Me to thee has the greater sin."

The words were not without their effect on Pontius Pilate. "From then on Pilate was looking for a way to release Him." But in the end he succumbed to the cry which brought up before his face the vision of the god who was Pilate's real master. It was not the Nazarene who was on trial now, but the Roman himself. Let him choose. He could crucify Christ, and condemn himself before the tribunal of Eternal Justice; or he could free Christ, and condemn himself before the tribunal

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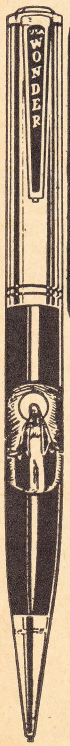

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of Tiberius Caesar, whose friendship, in the only world which Pilate knew, meant life. The fanatical hatred of the Jewish leaders put him to the test: political martyrdom or Deicide. Pilate chose Deicide.

"If thou release this Man, thou art no friend of Caesar; for everyone who makes himself king sets himself against Caesar."

The rest was only formality. Pilate led Jesus out of the praetorium and left Him with guards at the foot of the tribunal while he mounted the steps to his judgment seat. The tribunal was a platform raised in the square outside the Fortress Antonia. St. John tells us that it was called *Lithostrotos*, in Greek, but in Hebrew, *Gabbatha*. It was then about noon, "the sixth hour."

There was a skirmish of words, an effort on the part of Pilate to save face in the hour of his tragic failure.

"Behold your King!"

"Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!"

"Shall I crucify your King?"

"We have no king but Caesar."

Neither had Pilate—and no other god.

A tense silence dropped over the world before him as Pilate spoke the sentence of death. "And so they took Jesus and led Him away."

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Continued from page 29

Dear Infant Saviour, with the humble shepherd-folk, I kneel hard by the crib a yet unredeemed world has given you. Your handiwork has indeed been spoiled when men could treat an Infant, yea an Infant-God, like this. Homeless, you lie before me; but, Jesus, be homeless no longer! Poor though it be, come make my heart your home. You ask for it; so let it be. Take possession of my heart, strange dwelling as it is for God, and make it yours forever. Make it all your own so that none may share therein a part. From early morn, all through the long hours of the day until the shadows fall, come stay with me, Lord Jesus, stay!

"May the little hand of Christ bless my year,
And the great Heart of Christ hold me dear.

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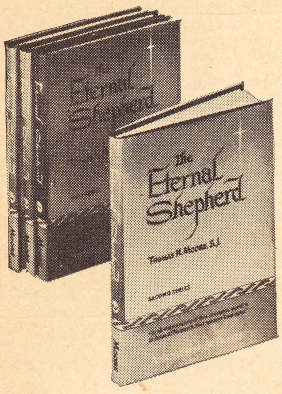

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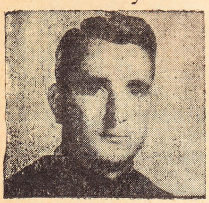

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Give your life to Christ as His Missionary in pagan lands! He needs *you* as a Priest or Lay-Brother to help save the millions of souls entrusted by the Holy Father to the Xaverian Missionaries in Asia, Africa and South America.—For information write to: **Director of Vocations—Xaverian Fathers—Holliston, Mass.**

Graymoor Friars

Graymoor, Garrison 2, N. Y.

Please send me without obligation your literature in regard to ☐ Priesthood ☐ Brotherhood.

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Franciscan Fathers, T.O.R.

Aspirants to the Priesthood or Brotherhood are welcome to ask for particulars by writing to **The Novice Master, Sacred Heart Novitiate, 4715 Sargent Road, N.E., Washington 17, D.C.**

ONE NEW READER
for the Messenger

ONE NEW FRIEND
for the Sacred Heart

The Missionaries of La Salette

cordially invite boys of High School age and College students to join their ranks as priests and religious. The special purpose of the Congregation, founded in response to Mary's apparition at La Salette, France, is the conversion of sinners. Main requirements are: an average intelligence, a sound moral character, and a sincere desire to serve God in the priesthood and religious life. For full details write to **Rev. Director of Vocations, La Salette Seminary, Hartford 6, Conn. or La Salette Seminary, Jefferson City, Mo.**

The Christian Brothers

A World-wide Teaching Institute. Exclusively Brothers devoted to boys. Offers young men interested in the religious life and this kind of apostolate the opportunity to serve God as: Religious teachers, Religious engaged in domestic, clerical and mechanical skills. For information address: **The Vocational Director, FSC, La Salle Institute, Glencoe 1, Mo.**

Franciscan Brothers of the Holy Cross

invite young men to join them. The primary purpose is the sanctification of their own members. Besides this, to help the needy by works of charity, and the education and training of boys in Trade Boarding Schools. For information apply to: **Rev. Brother Superior, St. James Trade School, R.R. 1, Springfield, Illinois.**

The Franciscan Fathers

Third Order Regular of St. Francis, offer to young Men and Boys special opportunities to study for the Priesthood. Lack of funds no obstacle. Candidates for the religious Lay Brotherhood also accepted. For further information write to **Father James, T.O.R., Box 289, Hollidaysburg 25, Penna.**

Carmel—The Order of Mary

Discalced Carmelite Fathers combine a life of monastic prayer and apostolic activity. Grammar and high school graduates accepted for our Minor Seminary. For further information about the priesthood or lay-brotherhood write to: **Rev. Director of Vocations, O.C.D., Discalced Carmelite Monastery, 514 Warren Street, Brookline, Massachusetts.**

Sons of Mary, Health of the Sick

The Priests and Brothers of the Sons of Mary, Health of the Sick specialize in medical and Catechetical work for the missions. Men with crafts and trades as well as Nurses, Doctors and Technicians are specially needed for the Missions. Age 18-30. For information write to: **Sons of Mary, Health of the Sick, Sylva Maria, Framingham, Massachusetts.**

Religious Teachers
The Franciscan Brothers

Third Order Regular of St. Francis. Personal sanctification and the salvation of souls. High School graduates eligible for entrance into St. Bonaventure Postulate. Grammar school graduates and high school students eligible for St. Anthony Juniorate. Entrance dates: Juniorate: in February—September; Postulate: on January 26th and July 26th. Make preparations early. Send for information; there is no obligation. Cut out and mail to the Brother Recruiter:

ST. FRANCIS MONASTERY,
41 Butler Street, Brooklyn 21, New York

I am interested in the Franciscan Brotherhood.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

Age _____

Juniorate ☐ Postulate ☐

Jesuit Brothers

win God's greater glory and souls for Jesus Christ, by devoting their skills in crafts and office work to the needs of Colleges, Schools and Parishes in the United States and in the foreign missions. Enthusiastic, generous men over eighteen years of age, desirous of doing something more for God and souls, are invited to obtain further information about the Jesuit Brother's life by writing to **Father Thomas X. Lewis, S J., 39 E. 83rd St., New York 28, N.Y. Tele. BU 8-6200, RE 7-3360.**

Franciscan Missionary Brothers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

care for the needy, aged, afflicted and chronically ill. Nurse the sick and save souls. Whatever your talents are, they can be used to assist in this tremendously needed apostolate. Write to: **Reverend Brother Superior, St. Francis Monastery, Eureka, Mo.**

Most Holy Trinity Fathers

offer to young Men and Boys opportunity to study for the Order. Lack of funds no impediment. Candidates for the religious lay-brotherhood also accepted. For further information write to **Director of Vocations. O.Ss.T., St. John de Matha Monastery, Hyattsville, Maryland.**

Get Going

Boys, young men and belated vocations, GIs included, the Oblates have just what you want as a religious in the Priesthood or Lay-Brotherhood, either as a home or Foreign Missioner. Write about your desires. **Vocation Dir. Rev. O. Munie, O.M.I., Oblate Fathers, Belleville, Ill.**

Brothers of Mercy

A nursing order seeking self-sacrificing young men between the ages of 17-37 years to live a Religious Life to secure salvation for their own souls laboring in His vineyard in various duties or caring for the sick and infirm. Address: **Rev. Bro. Provincial, Ransom Road, Clarence, N.Y.**

Daughters of the Most Holy Redeemer

The Sisters devote their lives to take care of the sick in private homes and hopsitals, of the aged in homes, conduct boarding houses for girls. Candidates between 16 and 30 years of age are accepted. For further information write to: **Rev. Mother Superior, Daughters of the Most Holy Redeemer, Meadowbrook, Pa.**

The First Step!

Follow Christ in home or foreign missions—teaching, nursing, care of orphans and aged, or social work. Take the first step—write for free literature: **Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, P. O. B. 1858, MSH55, Paterson, N. J.**

Sisters Auxiliaries of the Apostolate

A Home Mission Congregation, invites young and middle-aged maidens to labor amongst the poor, teaching parochial schools and catechetical work. For information write to: **Mother Superior, SS. Peter & Paul's Convent, 142 Maple Avenue, Monongah, W. Va.**

Parish Visitors

of Mary Immaculate serve Christ as home mission Sisters and catechists. **Address: Mother General, Marycrest, Monroe, New York.**

Vocations Needed

How would you like to become a Servant of the Holy Infancy of Jesus and devote your life to the aged and the sick, or to new-born infants? We also do charitable work in homes and foreign missions, and perform domestic duties. For further information write to: **Mother M. Melitta, Villa Maria, P. O. Box 708, Plainfield, N. J.**

The Sisters of the Little Company of Mary

devote their lives to the care and assistance of the sick and dying. Candidates between 17 and 30 years of age are accepted. For further information write to **The Little Company of Mary Hospital, Evergreen Park, Illinois.**

"To Give Souls to God . . . and God to Souls"

As a Little Sister of the Poor you would be working among God's aged poor. By administering to the weary bodies and immortal souls of those who come to our door for aid, you combine the Corporal Works of Mercy and the Spiritual Works of Mercy—as you sanctify yourself by the exercise of the virtues and vows of Religion. Please write to: **Rev. Mother Provincial, Little Sisters of the Poor, 1200 Valley Street, Baltimore 2, Md.; Bushwick & DeKalb Aves., Brooklyn 21, N. Y.; 2358 Sheffield Ave., Chicago 14, Ill.**

As Hospital Franciscans

you may be an active contemplative and nurse the sick in hospital or home, teach catechism, visit the poor in their homes, perform household tasks, prepare the altar, do office work, chant hymns of praise in the Chapel of Perpetual Adoration, or any task God asks of you—in home mission centers in the U.S., or in Japan. **Write to Reverend Mother Provincial, Hospital Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, P.O. Box 42, Springfield, Illinois.**

Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul

offer a joyous way of religious life in the service of the poor, the lonely, the forsaken. Girls between eighteen and thirty who have the courage to respond to Christ's invitation to leave all and follow Him may find peace and happiness in a life dedicated to God in social work, teaching, nursing, or the care of children. *Sponsored by a friend of the Daughters of Charity who loves their love of God and love of their fellow man.* Send for descriptive literature to **Sister Bertrande, Marillac Seminary, Normandy 21, St. Louis, Missouri.**

Active Carmelites

Perhaps the Queen of Carmel wants to clothe YOU with the special sign of her love—her scapular. If you are not inclined to teach, work with the Aged and Infirm offers untold possibilities for your talents. Girls from 15 to 35, of good Catholic families, who feel that they have a vocation and who desire to live a life hidden in Christ in a Community dedicated to Mary and Carmel, are welcome to send for descriptive literature or come for a personal interview. Apply to: **Reverend Mother M. Angeline Teresa, O. Carm., St. Teresa's Motherhouse, Avila on the Hudson, Germantown, New York.**

Young Ladies

desirous of becoming Nuns, join the Sisters of St. Dominic (White Habit) a Congregation of Papal Right, whose members recite the Divine Office daily and whose object is to bring countless souls to Christ, by teaching chlidren in parochial schools, by caring for the aged, and nursing the sick in our Hospitals. For information address **Rev. Mistress of Novices, St. Catherine's Novitiate, Kenosha, Wis.**

Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis

devote their lives to the care of orphans and the aged; to nursing the sick in hospitals and the teaching of youth. The Community enjoys the privilege of Perpetual Adoration, combining the active and contemplative life. **Address Mother Superior, Williamsville, New York.**

Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be loved everywhere! Would you like to make the realization of this motto your life work? Then join the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. They were founded by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, and are active in teaching the young, mothering orphans, nursing the sick and the infirm, at home and in the foreign missions. The Sacred Heart needs generous and courageous souls to do His work. Be one of them! Girls of high school age apply for admission to the Juniorate; graduates and others up to the age of 30, to the Novitiate. Write to: **Mother Provincial, St. Michael's Convent, Bernharts, Reading, Pa.**

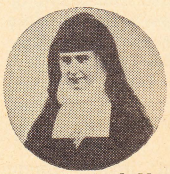
Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother

(Third Order of St. Francis) Dedicate your life to Christ and His Blessed Mother by becoming a Sister of the Sorrowful Mother. Activities: Hospital work, teaching, and caring for the aged, the convalescent, and orphans, etc. For information write to **Mother Superior, Convent of the Sorrowful Mother, 6718 Cedarburg Road, Milwaukee 9, Wisconsin.**

The Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood

extends an invitation to generous young women who are interested in making the Precious Blood fruitful in many souls. The varied activities of our religious life include: teaching kindergarten and the elementary grades, preparing youths for college or training them for humbler tasks in the home; teacher training; teaching catechism; nursing; music; art and dentistry—in the home and foreign missions. For further information, write: **Mother Superior, Precious Blood Convent, P.O. Box 43, Shillington, Pa.**

The Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus



Blessed Raphaela Mary of the S.H., Foundress

This Congregation is dedicated to reparation by means of daily adoration before the Blessed Sacrament exposed, retreat work, schools and foreign missions. Applicants are invited to make a private retreat in order to consider a choice of life. Write to: **Reverend Mother Superior, 2025 Church Road, Wyncote, Pa.**

Generous Souls

who wish to devote their lives to the conversion and education of the Natives of Oceania and to the care of Lepers in the South Sea Islands and in Jamaica, may address the Mother Superior, **Regional House, Marist Missionary Sisters, Framingham Center, Mass.**

In the Footsteps of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini

A message to Catholic young ladies—Would you like to become a Sister? The Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, founded by St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, offers a field of apostolic labor suited to the most varied talents of young women. Would you like to teach? To nurse the sick? To work in the house of foreign missions? To care for orphans? Or, like Martha, to devote yourself to domestic duties? Write for information to **Reverend Mother Superior, Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, West Park, New York.**

The Sisters of the Divine Savior

invite young ladies to join them in their work for souls in home and foreign missions, teaching, nursing, care of the aged and orphans and other specialized fields. For information, write to: **Mother Provincial, S.D.S., 3516 Center St., Milwaukee 10, Wis.**

Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

an American Congregation founded in 1901, welcome candidates who wish to serve the Lord by serving His little ones, in schools, hospitals, domestic work, and parishes. For further information please write to: **Rev. Mother General, 3419 Gasconade Street, St. Louis 18, Mo.**

The Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis

under the inspiration of the gentle Saint of Assisi welcome suitable candidates in their Apostolate of mercy which includes the care of the poor and the sick in their homes and in hospitals. Would you like to consecrate your life humbly and simply to Christ for the poor and afflicted? **Write to: Mother Provincial, St. Clare Convent, Hartwell, Cincinnati, Ohio.**

Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus

welcome candidates who wish to consecrate themselves to the Divine Heart of Jesus by taking care of children, the aged and Missions. Apply to **Reverend Mother Provincial, Provincial Superior, 1214 Kavanaugh Place, Wauwatosa 13, Wisconsin.**

Missionary Sisters of St. Benedict

A new Benedictine community devoted to the spiritual and corporal works of mercy in the home mission field and to the apostolate of the Catholic press. For information write to **Mother Superior, Holy Family Convent, Benet Lake, Wisconsin. Exceptions made as to age.**

Sisters of St. Francis

Young ladies who desire to serve God in Hospital Work and Social Service may write to: **Rev. Mother General, St. Francis Convent, Rice Lake, Wisconsin.**

The Sisters of the Infant Jesus

(Nursing Sisters of the Sick Poor) offer you the opportunity of serving Christ in His sick poor. This service may be given directly by caring for the sick in their own homes and at Mercy Hospital, Rockville Centre, N.Y.: or indirectly, by fulfilling other duties relating to care of the sick. A candidate must be between the ages of 18 and 30, in good health and have the desire of binding herself to the service of Christ by the simple vows of Poverty. Chastity and Obedience. For further information write to: **Mother Mary Anna, Motherhouse, 439 Henry Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.**

Missionary Benedictine Sisters

Young ladies who wish to join a life of prayer and apostolic work according to Benedictine ideals in home and foreign missions, may write for information to **Reverend Mother Prioress, Immaculata Convent, Norfolk, Nebraska.**

The Sisters of Divine Providence

invite you to work full time in the service of the King of Kings and to devote your life to the saving of many souls by teaching, nursing, or performing various household duties. Lack of funds is no obstacle. If you have completed the eighth grade and desire to work full time for the noblest cause, apply to: **Rev. Mother Provincial, Sisters of Divine Providence, Mt. Providence, Normandy 21, Mo.**

The Sisters of the Holy Cross

invite young women to join in the work of their apostolate. The Sisters conduct grade and high schools, colleges and hospitals in the United States. They have foreign missions in East Pakistan and Brazil. Further information may be obtained from: **The Mistress of Novices, Box M3, Saint Mary's Convent, Notre Dame, Indiana.**

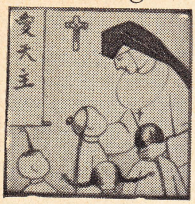
Carmelite Sisters of St. Therese

Missionary community of the southwest dedicated to the love of God by following St. Therese's way of spiritual childhood. Service of God includes: Teaching, Retreats, Home for the Aged, Nurseries, etc. For further information: **Rev. Mother Superior, 1300 Classon Dr., Oklahoma City, Okla.**

The Franciscan Sisters

of the Immaculate Conception invite generous girls, between the age of 16-30 years, who are interested in teaching, nursing the sick or taking care of children in orphanages. They welcome also candidates for their foreign mission work in schools, hospitals and orphanages. Kindly write to: **Mother Provincial, O.S.F., 291 W. North Street, Buffalo 1, N. Y.**

Missionary Canonesses of St. Augustine



Great variety of missionary activities. Schools, Hospitals, Dispensaries, Care of Lepers, Social Service work, etc. in China, Philippines, India, Congo, West Indies. For information write to: **St. Augustine's Novitiate, 96 Menands Rd., Menands, N.Y.**

The Little Sisters of the Assumption

are Home Missioners who devote their lives to gaining the family to Christ through exercising the corporal and spiritual works of mercy in the homes of the Sick Poor. Young lady, yes, YOU who read this notice, would you not like to follow such a Christ-like mission? For further information apply to **Reverend Mother Superior, Assumption Vale, Coopertown Rd., Haverford, Pa.**

The Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer

Dominican Sisters. Congregation of St. Rose of Lima. Young women desiring to devote their lives to the religious service of Christ's afflicted poor are earnestly invited to write to **Reverend Mother Superior at Rosary Hill Home, Hawthorne, N. Y.**

To Jesus through Mary Queen of the Seraphic Order

With the Franciscan Sisters of the Five Wounds you can help spread Christ's Kingdom by the Franciscan Way of Life and the pursuit of its ideal of personal sanctification and the sanctification of others. Their work for the Education of Youth and their Colored Missions, carried on in the spirit of the Little Poor Man of Assisi, afford ample opportunities for attaining both ideals. Apply: **Reverend Mother Provincial, O.S.F., 3725 Ellerslie Avenue, Baltimore 18, Md.**

Young Women

Desirous of dedicating their lives to the fruitful ministry of Reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the direction and care of friendless women, as members of the Sisters of Reparation of the Congregation of Mary, are asked to write for further information to **Mother Superior, St. Zita's Villa, Monsey, N. Y.**

The Sisters of the Most Holy Trinity

invite young ladies between the ages of 16 and 35 years who wish to consecrate their lives to the teaching of Christ's little ones to write to **Mother Veronica, Sisters of the Most Holy Trinity, The National Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, 21320 Euclid Ave., Euclid 17, Ohio.**

Double for Mary

Women 14 to 35 may serve her Son in Congregation devoted to teaching and domestic work. All houses in Louisiana. Booklets on request. **Write Mother Superior, Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, 3037 Dauphine St., New Orleans, La.**

Missionaries of Our Lady of Mercy

For generous young women desirous of giving all to Christ and souls. Write **Rev. Mistress of Novices 914 East 9th Street, Kansas City 6, Mo.**

THE SCHOOLS, novitiates, and nursing schools represented on these pages are anxious to receive inquiries from prospective students or candidates. These advertisements are a source of information which it would be difficult to obtain otherwise. Replies from MESSENGER readers encourage the Reverend clergy and Religious to continue their investment in these pages.

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Enclose $1.00 cash, check or M. O., and receive by return mail the nicest gift any home could wish for.

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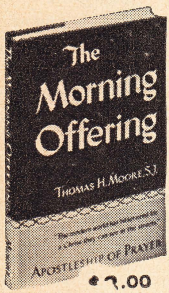

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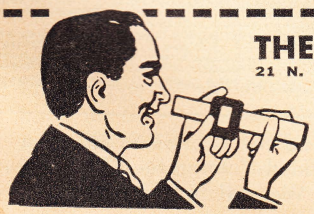

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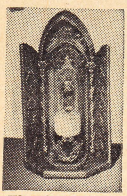

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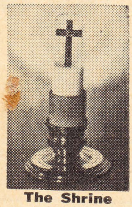

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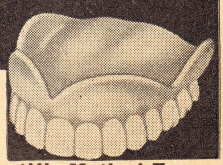

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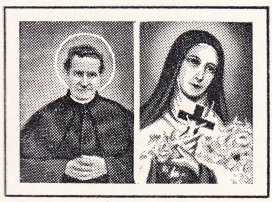

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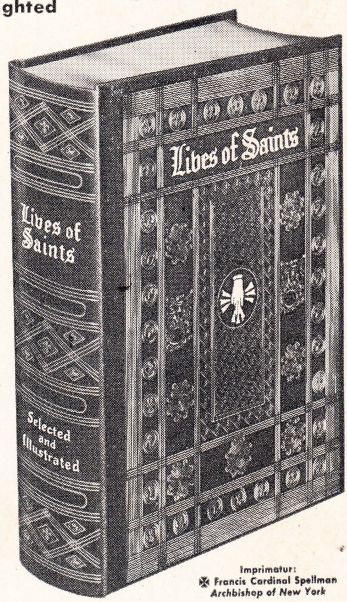

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